UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA

DEPARTAMENTO DE LÍNGUA E LITERATURA

ESTRANGEIRAS

THE FANTASY CONTENT OF ALICE IN WONDERLAND AND THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

TESE SUBMETIDA À UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA PARA A OBTENÇÃO DO GRAU DE MESTRE EM LETRAS.

MARIA CRISTINA S. DE BORBA

JULHO de 1982

Esta tese foi julgada adequada para a obtenção do título de

Mestre em Letras

Especialidade Língua Inglêsa e Literatura Correspondente e aprovada em sua forma final pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação.

in absentia, Prof. John Derrick, PhD
orientador

Prof. Arnold Selig Gordenstein, PhD
co-orientador

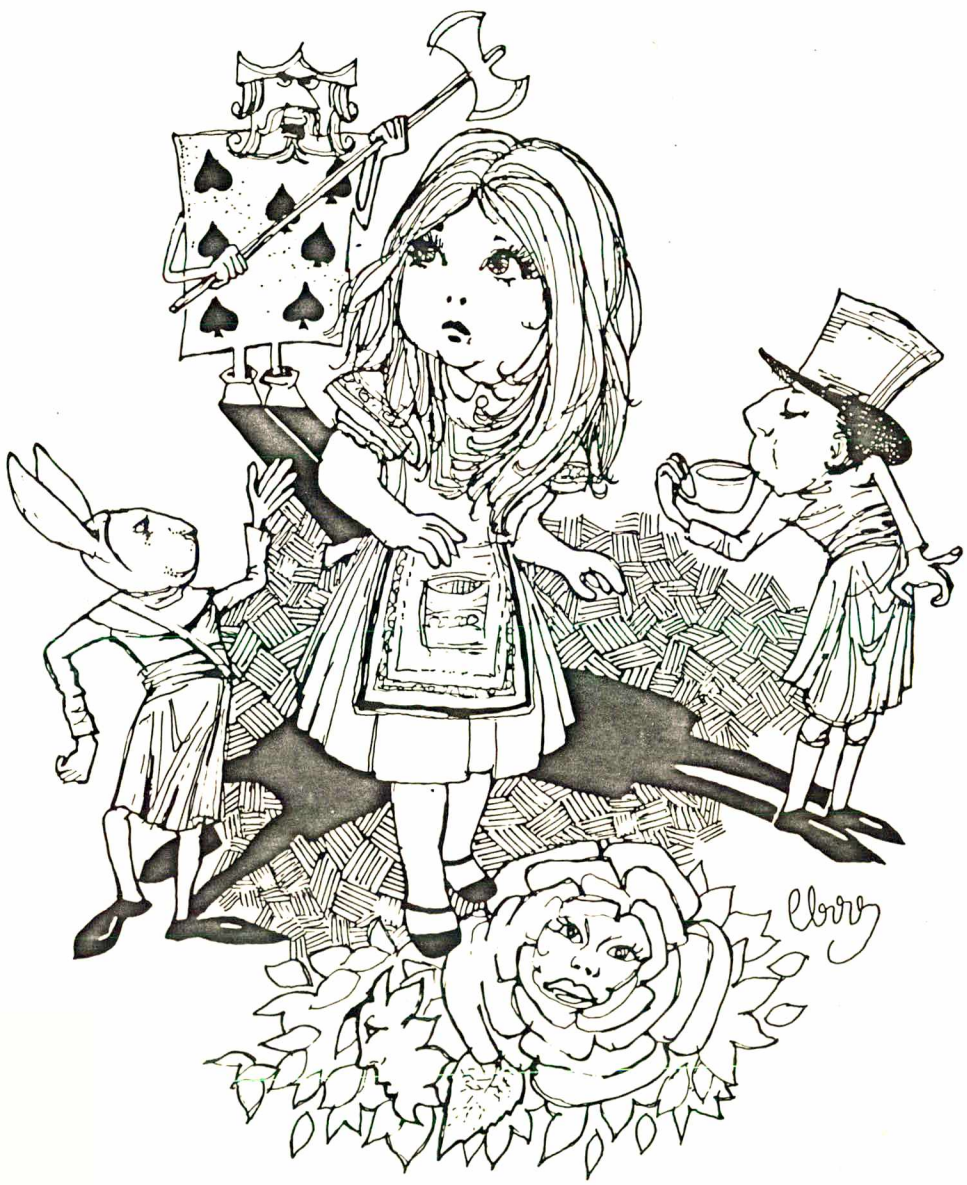
Prof. Hilário Bohn, PhD
coordenador do Curso

Apresentada perante a Comissão Examinadora composta dos professores

Prof. Arnold Selig Gordenstein, PhD

Profª Susana Borneo Funck, PhD

Profª Marlene dos Santos, PhD



Para Julio

AGRADECIMENTOS

Ao Prof. John Bruce Derrick

Ao Prof. Arnold Selig Gordenstein

À Profa. Susana Borneo Funck

Ao cartunista e jornalista Clóvis Medeiros, autor das ilustrações.

A todos os professores do Programa de Pós-graduação em Letras da UFSC opção Inglês e Literatura Correspondente.

AGRADECIMENTO ESPECIAL

Ao espírito livre e profunda percepção didática do Prof. John Bruce Derrick que geraram o clima que tornou este trabalho possível.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This dissertation basically discusses fantasy, magic and nonsense in Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. It also tries to characterize these themes in order to show the author's unique treatment of them.

The analysis starts with a review of the pertinent criticism and is divided in four chapters which discuss the cited themes (with the exception of the second chapter which is dedicated to Lewis Carroll's life and his works).

The study of fantasy, magic and nonsense has a theoretical support. Fantasy, for example, is looked at under the light of some very general psychoanalytic concepts. Also in the chapter dedicated to the discussion of this subject, some ideas of the known critic Bruno Bettelheim are included. His ideas are mainly related to the fantasy side of fairy-tales and their appeal to children. Magic, in its turn, is discussed both on the basis of anthropology and of the psychology of the child as described by Jean Piaget. Finally, nonsense is analysed and discussed taking into consideration ideas and concepts which philosophy and logic raise concerning this subject.

The aim of this study, therefore, is to relate the three themes in question and to arrive at conclusions.

Such conclusions shall lead to the awareness that Carroll was a great and original writer who wrote both for adults and children and who was very much concerned with the individual achievement of original thought and reasoning.

RESUMO

Esta dissertação discute, basicamente, o conteúdo de fantasia, magia e "nonsense" em Alice no País das Maravilhas e Através do Espelho, de Lewis Carroll. Descreve também estes temas com o objetivo de caracterizar o que há de peculiar no tratamento que o autor lhes dispensa.

A análise inicia com uma visão geral da crítica pertinente e divide-se em quatro capítulos que discutem os temas citados (com exceção do segundo capítulo que é dedicado à vida e à obra de Lewis Carroll).

A discussão da fantasia, da magia e do "nonsense" é apresentada com algum "background" teórico. O tema da fantasia, por exemplo, é apresentado sob a luz de alguns conceitos psicanalíticos gerais. Também neste capítulo estão presentes algumas idéias do crítico Bruno Bettelheim. As idéias deste crítico estão principalmente relacionadas com o lado fantástico dos contos de fadas e com a atração que despertam em crianças. A magia, por seu lado, é discutida com base na antropologia social e na psicologia da criança sob o ponto de vista de Jean Piaget. Finalmente, o "nonsense" é analisado e discutido levando em consideração idéias e conceitos que são objeto de estudo da filosofia e da lógica.

O estudo relaciona os três temas em questão, concluindo sobre suas peculiaridades e levando ao conhecimento de que Carroll foi um escritor original e talentoso que preocu-

pava-se com a conquista pessoal do raciocínio e de pensamentos originais.

1. INTRODUCTORY

1.1. Statement of problem.

Much has been said, not only by experts, about the fantasy content of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass and What Alice found There. Because the books are widely known it is difficult to find someone who has not something to say about this matter. Nevertheless, the meaning of fantasy is not always clear and opinions tend to be generally confused but usually attractive. It seems to me that the fantasy content of the 'Alice' books and the different forms Carrol has chosen to give shape to this subject is a problem which deserves discussion not only because it is very popular and appealing but also because it is sometimes foggy. For the term fantasy carries the notion of the unknown, of the super-natural, of secrets and mysteries which, somehow attract us a lot. I have to state that this attraction has also motivated me towards the study of such a subject because I also appreciate the unknown and, above all I like to clarify the secrets of literature although I am perfectly aware that this is not always possible. In this sense, the discovery of the fantasy content of Alice

in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass and What Alice found There is an intellectual attempt which I intend to be succesful but which may turn out to be as obscure as the subject itself generally tends to seem. But my aim is not to involve the theme of fantasy in hermetic and obscure academic ideas or concepts on the contrary, I intend to clarify its meaning and its function in Carroll's 'Alices'.

The way which seems, to me, to be not the best but at least a very interesting one to analyze the fantasy content of the 'Alice' books is to try to relate this theme to magic and nonsense which are also important themes in Carroll's creative works. The relation established between these subjects and fantasy is not something arbitrary but is based on the empirical knowledge that they share something - fogginess, mystery, unclarity - and that they are all permeated by a certain feeling of unreality and illogicality.

The subject of fantasy is, surely, a very complex one. The difficulty in trying to write about such a subject and study it mainly lies in the fact that there are many ideas and definitions of fantasy, some of them completely opposite, as we are going to see. Another problem which has to be taken into consideration is the psychological appeal and importance of fantasy as a literary device. Some experts and researchers tend to consider the so-called psychological approach as a very personal one which generally involves the personal and sometimes private life of the author. Here again opinions also differ: some are

very strict against the use of such an approach to a literary work and others praise it fervently.

My idea is that the study of fantasy in the 'Alice' books cannot be disconnected from a certain psychological orientation not because I am a psychologically-oriented researcher but because the subject seems to ask for such an approach. But because I do not believe in hermetic forms of thought of any kind and because my aim is to clarify the theme of fantasy in the 'Alice' books and to free it from the academic obscurantism in which it is presently involved, I will use the psychological approach only as a means and not as an aim. For I feel that I could not start my dissertation with established ideas for this fact would lead me to a danger: the danger of not seeing Carroll's meanings and imposing upon him and his literary works ideas which could be very far from being his own.

My intention, then, is to try to answer questions such as: What is fantasy? How does fantasy operate upon children? How do adults react to the 'Alice' books? How are they touched by the possible fantasy content of Carroll's stories? What is magic? What does fantasy share with magic? Can magic involve fantasy in itself? What is nonsense? Does fantasy find a place in nonsense? What are Alice's, as a character, core fantasies? How are they portrayed? Are they universal fantasies? Is the fantasy content of the 'Alice' books universal? But I want to answer these questions being as close to the text as possible and being honest in trying to find the truth about Carroll's meanings. By being

honest I mean to be as open-minded as possible without trying to impose upon the stories ideas which do not belong to the text.

Also, because I am going to deal with magic and nonsense I believe that a certain anthropological and philosophical orientation is necessary. Again I will start my studies with these lines of thought because I think that magic is deeply related to Anthropology while nonsense is related to Philosophy and Logic.

1.2. Review of Criticism

In this section I will give the reader an idea about the general views literary criticism has about Lewis Carroll's 'Alices' and the themes of fantasy and nonsense. I would like to start presenting the ideas of the more psychoanalytic critics who have a clear tendency to relate (in my opinion too deeply) work and author.

Peter Coveney in his essay "Escape" makes a survey of the children's literature of the end of the nineteenth century stressing the point that

thid kind of literature, in oposition to that of the romantics, tended to be an schizoid evasion of responsible adulthood. In This sense, Coveney considers the 'Alice' books as expressions of a morbid and sick mind who could not adjust to the world it lived in. He says:

> The justification of secular art is the responsability it bears for the enrichment of human awareness, for the extension of the reader's consciousness. The cult of the child in certain authors of the nineteenth century is a denial of this responsibility. Their awareness of childhood is no longer an interest in growth and integration, such as we find in The Prelude, but a means of detachmnet and retreat from the adult world. One feels their morbid withdrawal towards psychic death. The misery on the face of Carroll and Barrie was there because their response towards life had been subtly and irrevocably negated. Their photographs seem to look out at us from the nostalgic prisons they had created for themselves in the cult of Alice Liddell and Peter Pan. . . . . They indulged nostalgia because they refused or failed to come to sensitive terms with the cultural realities of the times. Regret for childhood takes on the same obsessive emotional quality as the exile's nostalgia for "home." Certain artists at the end of the century were clearly very much abroad in an alien world.[1]

Coveney's essay is part of a very important publication which combines several different essays by different authors with different critical orientations: the Norton Critical Edition. Coveney, as one can see in the quoted passage above, has a deeply psychological approach to Carroll. But the point I would like to stress is not the virtue of Coveney's approach (which I have a great respect for) but the fact that he does not seem to think, at least in this essay, about the 'Alice' books as literary pieces, but as forms of personal evasion or as forms of sublimation of the author's own problems and delusions. He finishes his essay saying:

> If life for Carroll was indeed a dream, the dream is evidently only too often in Through the Looking Glass Dodgson's own personal nightmare. With only the slightest susceptibility to the analysis of literature in psychological terms, it would be difficult not to see both works as psychological fantasies. They are clearly the works of neurotic genius . . . . But with Carroll's art, the neurosis is the irrelevance. Even in the clear references one feels to the neurosis, especially in Through the Looking Glass, one senses the extraordinary power of artistic sublimation that Carroll brought to the achievement of the two books.[2]

It is interesting to remark that in an attempt to do justice to Carroll, as writer, Coveney has inserted in the very end

of his essay the idea that in spite of being personal sublimations of the author's own and personal problems the books of 'Alice' end up achieving a certain artistic magnitude.

But, Coveney is not the only psychoanalytically oriented critic whose essay is to be found in the Norton Critical Edition of Alice in Wonderland. Phyllis Greenacre also has the same type of literary approach to the works of Carroll, and in the essay "Reconstruction and Interpretation" the 'Alice' books are analized under the light of Carroll's own troubles and frustrations which are, according to the critic, mainly related to his repressive childhood.

> Cruelty, anger and tempestuous behaviour are dealt with in the Alice books, especially in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, and presented so continuously and in such exaggerated form as to become unbelievable and ridiculous. Indeed it is all a dream . . . . The stories themselves give evidence, however, of the deposit of reactions of this kind in the early experiences in Charles Dodgson's personal history.[3]

Another peculiarity of the Greenacre essay is that in it the fantasies of Alice as portrayed in the books are looked at as if they were the fantasies of the author and not of the character. This fact implies that Carroll did not have sufficient aesthetic distance in the elaboration of his character's personality.

> That he suffered intensely from very early and organically felt jealousy is attested by the ubiquitousness of expressions of oral aggression in all his writing. The wish to eat up and the fear of being eaten up are written over and over again in his fantasies, and appear on nearly every page of Wonderland.[4] (italics added.)

In another important publication which concerners itself with criticism of the 'Alice' books we are also to find psychoanalytically oriented critics. One of these authors is A.M.E. Goldschmidt with whom I tend to sympathize due to his objective critical distance. The publication in question is Aspects of Alice and Goldschmidt's essay is entitled "Alice in Wonderland Psychoanalysed." This critic mainly deals with the Freudian symbolism of the 'Alice' books without emphasizing too much the personal life of the author. What the essay mainly hints at is the possible representations of sexual symbols in the stories and their relation to the main character; Alice. But, although Goldschmidt frequently treats the subject of sexual fantasies as fantasies of the character and not of the author, he finishes his essay making an evident statement about the fact that Lewis Carroll suffered from certain psychological disturbance and that this psychological disturbance characterizes the nature of Lewis Carroll's writings.

> Had he (Carroll) lived today he might have undergone analysis, discovered the cause of his neurosis, and lived a more contented life. But in that case he might not have written Alice in Wonderland.[5]

But maybe the most radical psychoanalytic oriented essay which I found in these months of research on Lewis Carroll is Paul Schilder's 'Psychoanalitic Remarks on Alice in Wonderland."[6] This essay can be also found in Aspects of Alice and it goes as far as considering the 'Alice' books pernicious to children. Of course Schilder's approach is not typical of a literary critic, for by the time of the publication of the essay he was research professor at the Department of Psychiatry in the Medical College of New York University, and this fact can partially explain his position. The fact is that Schilder not only considers Carroll as a schizophrenic but also states that nonsense literature, as a whole, is an expression of destructive tendencies. In his essay, Schilder also draws conclusions about Carroll's early days, saying that he probably did not have enough love from his parents and that he had certain homosexual impulses. I, personally, think this is going too far into someone's life especially when one unearths all these private aspects of the author's life. Also, I do not see anything new added to the comprehension of the stories by

the fact that Carroll had or had not love from his parents or that he was or was not a homosexual. Of course, it would be a primary mistake to consider man and literary piece as disconnected parts of the same whole and this is not what I am claiming. I would only like to call attention to the fact that maybe Schilder's essay emphasizes too much the natural link between author and creation.

Another work which follows the same line as Schilder, but without the same radicalism is John Skinner's "Lewis Carroll's Adventures in Wonderland." This work is partially reproduced in Aspects of Alice and its emphasis relies on the fact that Carroll did not have the necessary maturity to become an adult and that the worlds of Wonderland and Looking Glass were created for his own sake, for the satisfaction of his childish fantasies which he still needed to experience. The title itself explains his approach to Carroll: the adventures in the books of 'Alice' are not Alice's but Carroll's. I do not disagree completely with Skinner because I also think that the fantasies of Alice could also be Carroll's own fantasies by the fact that they convey, through Alice, feelings, sentiments and wishes which, I believe, portray general human experiences and in this sense they could apply to Carroll as well.

My point is that I see Carroll as an objective writer who had a proper aesthetics distance and not as a

writer who lost himself within the creative frame, losing his identity and assuming the identity of the character created. This is a point which seems to be general in all psychoanalytic criticism of Lewis Carroll's works; they do not see the author as a rational person who worked to create but as someone driven by spontaneous impulses who mainly wrote about his own experience without taking into consideration human experience as a whole. I, personally, see this position as very contrary to the meaning of art since art exists because it has the capacity to portray that which is part of all of us. In this sense Skinner's position is a little contradictory for it considers Carroll an immature author but at the same time considers that it is the identification between him and Alice which makes Alice, as a character, represent the collective world unconscious. He says:

> It is perhaps this unconscious identification with him which makes us understand him when he speaks to us through his stories and which will also make Alice live forever as a child of the collective world unconscious.[7]

Phyllis Greenacre, who has already been quoted in this section, has another essay published in Aspects of Alice which follows the same line of thought as her previous essay in the Norton Critical Edition. In this essay entitled "The Character of Dodgson as Revealed in the Writings of Carroll"

she distinguishes between Dodgson and Carroll and insists on the point that the specific themes which the books of 'Alice' deal with reveal Dodgson's real personality. She also thinks that the books are representations of his own fantasies. She discusses Carroll's attitudes towards eating and drinking, his relations to animals and other themes of the 'Alice' books using them as symbols for Carroll's personality analysis. In the end of her essay Greenace seems to contradict herself a little bit for she finishes her discussion on Carroll talking about the universality of the 'Alice' books in a way which surprises me as not being very characteristic of a psychoanalitic critic. She says:

> Perhaps no book except the bible is quoted as often in unlikely places and by improbable people as Alice. For in the account of Alice's experiences there is always some vividly mad vignette which can be used for comparison and relief in most of life's troubling dilemmas. The plot, however, the penetration into the hidden or secret garden and the difficulties encountered there, is in essence the most universal plot of mankind, whether stimulated by the sublibrarian's vision of the little girls playing in the Dean's garden, or from

> the gardens at Croft and Daresbury traversed by the engine of Love and inhabited by the civilized but combatant worms and caterpillars, or more remotely derived from the garden where Adam and Eve ate of the apple and the serpent of sophistication lurked nearby.[8]

Another essay which is to be found in the same publication is Kenneth Burke's "Comments on the Imagery of Catharsis in Literature."[9] This essay is very interesting in the sense that it applies psychoanalytical concepts to scenes and passages in the 'Alice' books without imposing them on the text. Burke simply comments on the passages without referring to the author and with the clear aim of clarifying Carroll's meaning. In his introduction Burke establishes his ideas about psychoanalysis as applied to literature. He says:

> So let us offer these pages as a contribution to what I elsewhere call the "Beauty Clinic".

Burke, in this essay (which is part of a bigger work called The Thinking of the Body) analyzes the reversal scenes, the theme of punishment as seen from a Victorian point of view and cosmo-vision, the notion of ambiguities and the possible sexual and intellectual meanings of Carroll's nonsense.

In the book Aspects of Alice many other psychoanalytically

oriented critcs are present, but I will not discuss all of them in detail because their opinions tend to be repetitive and the main ideas in regard to Carroll's 'Alices' have already been stated. The important point to consider, however, is that in the numerous publications which have come to my hands in the last months, none characterizes the meaning of fantasy. It is common for psychoanalytic critics to talk about fantasy but they do not say whose definitions they are following. For there are many definitions of fantasy and while some only differ in format, some tend to be incompatible and even contradictory. I am going to insert here two different definitions of fantasy. I know that this is not formaly the right place for the definitions to be for the specific chapter on fantasy is still to come, but I feel that it is important for the definitions to be here in the sense that they clarify the points I am trying to make in regard to the critics' opinions about this subject. The first definition is Otto Fenichel's, and the second one is Melanie Klein's. What has to be stressed is that these definitions, although both based upon Freudian lines, differ in the sense that Klein treats the subject with more lightness and considers fantasy as an activity we all engage in since birth. Klein tends to look at fantasy as a common mental activity while, by contrast, Fenichel tends to look at fantasy on the basis of <u>good</u> <u>and</u> <u>bad</u> that is destructive and creative fantasies. For the sake of exemplifying my comments in regard to the lack of use of definitions by

literary critics who talk about fantasy without delimiting their subject, I will present the following definitions; starting with Fenichel's.

> As long as thinking is not followed by action it is called fantasy: creative fantasy, which prepares some later action, and daydreaming fantasy, the refuge of wishes which cannot be fulfilled. The former, rooted in the unconscious, certainly also starts in the primary process and imagination but develops out of this sphere. The later becomes a real substitute for action in the state of 'introversion,' when 'small' movements acompanying fantasy become intense enough to bring discharge . . . . Does fantasy stimulate the wish so that the tendency to realize fantasied ideas increases, or does fantasy channelize the wish so that what has been satisfied in games no longer needs to be satisfied in earnest? The answer becomes obvious in the case of sexual fantasies. If a man merely anticipates in fantasy prospective sexual intercourse, his tension and longing for fulfillment increase; but if his fantasies stimulate him to masturbation his tension decreases or vanishes. A preparatory fantasy has regressed to the substitutive type.[10]

Now let's see what Melanie Klein has to say about this same subject:

. . . . a phantasia inconsciente é a expressão mental dos instintos, e existe, portanto, como estes, desde o começo da vida. Os instintos, por definição, buscam objetos. A experiência de um instinto no aparelho mental está ligada à phantasia de um objeto apropriado ao instinto. Assim, para toda tendência instintiva há uma phantasia específica correspondente. Ao desejo de comer corresponde uma phantasia de alguma coisa que seja comível e capaz de satisfazer êsse desejo ... A formação da phantasia é uma função do ego. O ponto de vista que considera a phantasia como expressão mental dos instintos, por meio do ego, pressupõe um mais alto grau de organização do ego do que postula Freud. Pressupõe que o ego, desde o nascimento, é capaz de formar, e que é mesmo impelido pelos instintos e pela angústia a formar relações de objeto primitivas, na phantasia e na realidade. A partir do momento de nascimento, a criança tem de lidar com o impacto da realidade, começando com a experiência mesma do nascimento e passando a experiências incessantes de gratificação e frustração de seus desejos. Estas experiências da realidade influenciam imediatamente a phantasia inconsciente, e são, por estas influenciadas. Phantasia não é meramente uma fuga à realidade, mas o constante e inevitável acompanhamento das experiências reais, com as quais está constantemente em interação.[11]

I have to confess that I, personally, agree much more with Klein than with Fenichel for in Klein's definition we do not feel as if we were in an asylum or sanatorium whereas that is the feeling transmitted by Fenichel's. In my opinion Fenichel tends to be slightly moralistic while Klein puts good and bad fantasies on the same level by considering them mental expressions of instincts. Of course, I have not inserted those two definitions here only to remark their absence in literary critics' essays. I have included them because I am also going to discuss fantasy and I will be following Klein's definition of it. Nevertheless, I want to stress that I am not contradicting Otto Fenichel it is just that his definition does not seem to have the openness necessary for a literary analysis: it is much more applicable to the medical practice it was originally designed for. But, now that those general lines about fantasy and about the criticism found in the area of psychoanalysis have been stated, I would like to turn to another one, to that which is more concerned with the fairy tale side of the 'Alice' books.

Whenever the subject of fairy tales is mentioned, there is a publication which cannot be discarded: Bruno Bettelheim's The Uses of Enchantment.[12] This book is a very important one in the sense that it describes, though that is not its basic aim, the trajectory of fairy tales in history. It is, for sure, a publication which has as its main goal the evaluation of fairy tales and children stories,

but the only problem I see with it is that it seems to do it wrongly since it values very highly the didactic side of this kind of literature. Bettelheim is a psychoanalitically oriented critic, and he sees fairy tales as a form of literature which appeals to children because of their inherent capacity to portray children's inner dilemmas in a form which is easily accepted by them. Bettelheim, in his book, tends to look at fairy tales as stories able to convey the unconscious of children in a form which brings relief, and he compares their function with the function that dreams have for adults. In this sense, fairy tales would mean, for children, the same that dreams mean for adults: a way to balance one's inner troubles and keep mental equilibrium. I accept this position of Bettelheim's and I, generally, tend to consider his book as a very good guide to fairy tales since he discusses the many images of the most popular fairy tales in great detail and adds many interesting remarks. But his flaw is to consider children's stories as stories which aim to teach and prepare the child for the adult world both emotionally and intellectually. The critic does not consider fairy tales as sources of pleasure for children or as mere stories which happen to interest children simply because they deal with subject and ideas which are, somehow, attractive and appealing to them. Another problem in Bettelheim's approach to fairy tales, which is derived from this basic one, is that he does not differentiate between moralistic fairy tales and those which are not. He considers all fairy tales as

didactic in function and makes the distinction between fairy tales and fables which, in his opinion, have a moralistic side which fairy tales lack.

Another author who deals with the same theme, but who presents it with more clarity is Gillian Avery. Avery has written two essays in which he makes the distinction, based on literary history, between the moralistic and the non-moralistic fairy tale: he considers the 'Alice' books as part of the second group. Avery's essays which can be found in the Norton Critical Edition of Alice in Worderland are entitled, respectively, "Fairy Tales with a Purpose" and "Fairy Tales for Pleasure." When describing the first group of stories he says:

> Enchantment, in all these books, is only in the nature of supernatural machinery. There is no highly imaginative writing, no strange fairy tale settings, no original characterization. Invariably the supernatural is used to point the moral, not because the writers feel any intrinsic interest in it. Magic is a useful means of creating a situation, and bringing about the right denouement. The lessons are ordinary, and the fairies who enforce them are pallid and dull beside many creations of the nineteenth century.[13]

Later on he discusses the characteristics of the second group of stories as follows:

> In the unobtrusive but immense revolution that took place among children's books in the 1860s, when for the first time in the century stories of pure entertainment were allowed their place in the nursery shelves previously reserved for didactic and impeccably moral books, fairy tales played an important part. Although they had been bowdlerized and moralized almost out of existence, fairy tales had never been quite forgotten, and indeed it had often been recognized that they were particularly suitable for, and appreciated by children. Early nineteenth century educationalists like Mrs. Mortimer might thunder against the depraving effect on children's minds of fairyland adventures, and predicted that much indulgence in them would make children "tired of home, impatient of restraint, indifferent to simple pleasures, and adverse to sacred institutions," but while the tirades swept over their heads, children continued to seek out the kindly aunts or old nurses who could enthrall them with their fantasies of the Other World.[14]

But in spite of praising very highly the second group of stories there is a point concerning them which Avery does not discuss in detail: the presence of terror in children's stories being they moralistic or not. For an old question related to fairy-tales, in general, refers to the

matter of pleasure since they are, usually, very terrifying. The point is, however, that this terror is not necessarilly related to morals, and Avery does not make this point very clear. In what concerns the 'Alice' books and their innovative side, Avery has very good and interesting ideas about Carroll's capacity to transform terror into absurdity. Of course, we have to understand, and this is my opinion, that absurdity can take two different roads; one is that of humour and satire and the other is the path of fear itself. Nevertheless, Avery describes the 'Alice' books in a way with which I tend to agree, mainly in what relates to their irreverence against the usual form of didacticism.

> By treating the world of lessons and governesses with such playfulness, Lewis Carroll reduces it from the terrifying place it must sometimes have seemed to a manageable absurdity. In this way the Alice books strike as strong a blow against didacticism and cramming as did Felix Summerly's manifesto against Peter Parleysm. One of the best features of the books is that although in the course of her adventures Alice may be bullied and cross questioned by the creatures she meets, ... she always takes final control, overcoming the hostility of the court of the Queen of Hearts with her cry -"who cares for you? . . . . You're nothing but a pack of cards!"; and shaking the stiff, dictatorial, governessy Red Queen in Through the Looking Glass, back to a soft, fat, round,

> black kitten. It is wishfulfilment of the most appealing kind.[15]

Another critic who emphasizes the fairy tale side of the 'Alice' books is Elsie Leach. In her essay "Alice in Wonderland in Perspective"[16] Leach emphasizes the non-didactic characteristic of the 'Alice' books but also stresses their irrational aspect as characteristic of fairy tales too. Leach makes an analogy between the irrationality of the 'Alice' books and the irrationality of children. For the author the 'Alice' books have the capacity of promoting identification between story and reader by portraying their unconscious, their irrationality, by being so attractively non-oriented and non-framed as good fairy tales are.

An element which is, somehow, related to the fairy tale theme as well as to the fantasy theme is Carroll's specific technique of structuring a plot as a dream. Of course, much can be explained by his nonsense, but this theme is going to be discussed later, and we are going to see what critics think about it. What I want to insert here are some commentaries by Florence Becker Lennon referring to Carroll's ability to create an atmosphere of verisimilitude in his 'Alice' books even when those stories have the structure of dreams. In other words, the critic is referring to what I call Carroll's dream language and his poetic skill in creating a world where the unconscious is portrayed with

such actuality that there is no danger of rejection by the reader. In the following lines the critic compares the easy transference of magic to reality which Carroll achieves in the 'Alice' books with the same kind of verisimilitude attained by great names of literature.

> To Alice and its calm transference of the preposterous and magical into the everyday, can be traced such books as David Garnett's Lady into Fox, Christopher Morley's Thunder on the Left, James Hilton's Lost Horizon, the works of Robert Nathan, A. A. Milne, and many others. Gertrude Stein and James Joyce were Carrollian adepts. Works of imagination had existed before, but the special technique of the dream was Dodgson's own invention. Swift, for instance, takes pains to explain everything in Gulliver. Even A Midsummer Night's Dream, which has been called the first nonsense book in English, carefully prepares the groundlings for miracles to come. But the utter simplicity of the opening of Alice is disarming, and no explanations are required.[17]

Of course, the dream language theme is related to another important theme: the theme of nonsense. Much has been said about Carroll's nonsense and it is, with no doubt,

one of the most interesting features of the 'Alice' books. Many critics have shown their concern and respect for Carroll's nonsense which is a field in which all experts seem to agree. That is, no critic seems to find any reason for not considering the high quality standard of Carrollian nonsense. The different critics concerned with this matter differ in approach but never in opinion. One of the most recent publications about this subject is Francis Huxley's The Raven and The Writing Desk. Huxley starts from the famous puzzle "Why is a raven like a writing desk?" which the Mad Hatter asked Alice in the chapter "A Mad Tea-Party" in Alice in Wonderland and develops his thoughts with the aim to explain Carroll's nonsense based on this passage. The problem with Huxley's book, however, is that it is, in itself, a nonsense book, that is, Huxley wants to explain nonsense through nonsense, and this makes it very difficult for the common reader to understand Carroll's meanings. Huxley's book is one of those publications which instead of clarifying meaning makes it look hermetic and academic, more hermetic and academic than the subject originally was. But, in spite of this obscurantism, Huxley presents one of the best definitions of nonsense which I have encountered. He says:

> Nonsense is a logical game played with feeling by at least two people, in a spirit of self-contradiction, in such a way that one thing leads on to the other to the constant surprise of both parties.[18]

But, Huxley is far from being the only one concerned with Carroll's nonsense, for this subject is without a doubt one of the most exploited Carrollian themes. Elizabeth Sewell in her essay "The Balance of Brilling" stresses the point that nonsense, especially Carrollian nonsense plays, as she puts it, "against the mind's tendency to oneness."[19] She also points out that nonsense admits of no emotion, and she discusses the question of names based on the principle that nonsense is a path between nothingness and everythingness. On the whole her essay is very interesting and intelligent; the only problem I see with it, however, is that she tends to consider nonsense as merely a word play and that she does not consider, at least in this essay, nonsense within other codes or systems.

Another essay concerned with nonsense is to be found in the book Aspects of Alice. Roger Holmes is the author and the essay in question is "The Philosopher's Alice in Wonderland."[20] Holmes mainly discusses problems of identity, time, language and logic but always emphasizing the philosophical and existential questions which underlie such themes. Holmes' essay tends to be technical in the sense that his field of interest is not literature but symbolic logic. Even so, his essay presents good and extremely interesting assertions mainly about the matter of time. He also compares Carroll's preoccupation with time to that of James Joyce. But among the nonsense concerned critics whose words have come to my hands, perhaps the most

concerned with literary qualities was Edmund Wilson. In his essay "C. L. Dodgson: The Poet Logician", Wilson actually traces a parallel between Carroll's logic and his literature. Wilson emphasizes Carroll's knowledge of logic as a mean of communication with adults and children. Wilson seems to think that Carroll's logical mind opened a channel of communication, in different ways, of course, with adults and children by means of his poetic vein. For Wilson, Carroll combined two important skills: the rationality and distance of a logician, and the irrationality and passion of a poet. He compares Carroll to other popular Victorian writers who did not combine these two qualities as Carroll did:

> Charles Dodgson who, in morals and religion, in his attitude toward social institutions, was professedly, as he himself believed, more conventional than any of these, had the curious advantage of working at once with the abstract materials of mathematical and logical conceptions and with the irrationalities of dreams. His art has a purity which is almost unique in a period so cluttered and cumbered, in which even the preachers of doom to the reign of materialism bore the stamp and the stain of the industrial system in the hard insistence of their sentences and in the turbidity of their belchings of rhetoric. They have shrunk now, but Alice still stands.[21]

Another very interesting essay which treats the theme of nonsense is Patricia Meyer Spacks's 'Logic and Language."[22] By discussing the problem of language and Carroll's approaches to it in his 'Alice' stories, Spacks hints at the important problem of appearance and reality. Her ideas center on her distinction between language as it is formally represented and language as an expression of human's experience. She claims that in the real world language cannot be used loosely whereas in Wonderland or Looking Glass it can - for in those worlds Carroll did not assume the existence of an absolute truth. I, personally, tend to agree with Spacks for I also consider the worlds created by Carroll as free expressions of the human soul's experiences.

George Pitcher in his essay "Wittgenstein, Nonsense and Lewis Carroll" also deals with the problem of language, but he approaches the subject by comparing Carroll to Wittgenstein, a philosopher much concerned with nonsense. Pitcher's aim is to show that Carroll transformed in literary jokes some of Wittgenstein's main complaints about the traditional way philosophers tend to look at reality as expressed by words. Also, Pitcher stresses the difference of treatment that both Wittgenstein and Carroll dispensed to established philosophical dogmas: while Wittgenstein was a severe and serious critic of them, Carroll tended to make them look ridiculous. Pitcher's essay is interesting in the way that it discusses step by step the different concerns of Wittgenstein in relation to nonsense and their echoes in Carroll's 'Alices'. On the

whole, Pitcher acts very much in praise of Carroll for he compares his more satirical and irreverent side to Wittgenstein whose concerns about logic and reality were the same as Carroll's but who lacked the creative and poetic skill of Carroll. Wittgenstein was a philosopher and a logician and tended to avoid the world of myth and fantasy while Carroll, despite his concerns about philosophical and logical questions, jumped happily into it. Pitcher says:

> The same logical terrain that is a playground for Carroll, is a battlefield for Wittgenstein.[23]

But, without a doubt, one of the most relevant publications on Carrollian nonsense is Michael Holquist's essay "What is a Boojum? Nonsense and Modernism" Holquist's work is important in the sense that he relates nonsense to literature, taking into consideration aspects peculiar to literature such as its fictional side and its verisimilitude. Also, Holquist seems to sum up many of the random ideas of critics previously read, for he treats the theme of language and its looseness in Carroll's imaginative worlds as symptons of a quest for order which is to be found in modern literature. Maybe that is the most important virtue of this essay: its capacity to relate Carrollian nonsense not only to Carroll's logic but to his aesthetics and cosmo-vision.

Holquist does not treat Carroll's nonsense as an unit, but rather as part of a bigger whole: nonsense writing and modernism. Also, Holquist clarifies Carroll's meanings by distinguishing between absurdity and nonsense and by characterizing nonsense as a system whose aim is to achieve order. Holquist demythifies the idea that nonsense is chaos or disorder and shows that, on the contrary, nonsense hides under an appearence of disorder its willingness to achieve a state of balance and equilibrium. Holquist also discusses Carroll's puns and portmanteaux words establishing the idea that they come to life by the combination of two systems: language and logic. Because these systems cannot coexist in our well adjusted logic which tends to oneness, nonsense is created, and the reader has the superficial sentiment that nonsense is chaos and not a system of a different logic. He also points at the systematic nature of Carrollian nonsense. He says:

> Carroll's portmanteaux are words and not gibberish because they operate according to the rule which says that all coinages in the poem will grow out of the collapse of two known words into a new one. Carroll can deploy words he invents and still communicate, because he does so according to rules.[24]

Another critic who treats the matter of nonsense as present in the works of Carroll is Derek Hudson.[25] But

because Hudson deals with this topic in his biography of Lewis Carroll, he tends to touch the subject of nonsense superficially and without many critical opinions. Hudson mainly views Carroll's nonsense as a consequence of his poetic skill combined with his logical and mathematical mind. He also discusses the matter of nonsense as a form of satire of contemporary Oxford matters and concludes that Carrollian nonsense had a satirical side, but that its goal was larger than the small community of Oxford. In Hudson's opinion Carroll's nonsense criticizes, with humour, human nature in general.

In order to finish this review of the Lewis Carroll criticism in the areas of my interest, I would like to touch a point which is mentioned by Hudson but not much developed by him: Carroll's satire. Florence Milner in the essay "The Poems in Alice in Wonderland" analysis Carroll's capacity to make parodies. She compares Carroll's communicative and poetic satirical parodies with their moralistic and powerless originals. She discusses eight parodies in Alice in Wonderland refering back to their originals. Her conclusion is as follows:

> The parody is not the highest form of art and not the most skillful form of verse, but Lewis Carroll has done these eight so well that doubtless some of them will live after their originals are forgotten.[26]

Another critic interested in the same topic is John Ciardi. Ciardi in his essay "A Burble Through The Tulgey Wood"[27] discusses three of Carroll's parodies: "Father William", "The Crocodile" and "Jabberwocky". The interesting point about Ciardi's comments on "Jabberwocky" is that he considers it not only a nonsensical poetical expression of Carroll but also a satire on English ballads. Ciardi says that "Jabberwocky" follows the formal techniques of ballads but, unlike them, its tone is 'mockheroic'. Ciardi's ideas about Carroll's parodies also praise the author's satirical and critical ability.

> Carroll wrote a number of parodies, all of them aimed at deflating overserious morality.[27]

J. B. Priestley is also interested in Carroll's satirical side, and in his essay "A Note on Humpty Dumpty"[28] he defends the idea that Humpty Dumpty stands for the academic and prosaic critic. His ideas are based on the fact that Humpty Dumpty had stored useless knowledge and that Alice did not enjoy her meeting with him because of his academic and scholarly characteristics. I partially agree with Priestley, for Alice is evidently bored by Humpty Dumpty, but my question is whether Carroll is only showing the dullness of critics or hinting at scholars, in general, by pointing at their over-exaggerated seriousness and lack of sense of humour.

I believe that by now, the most relevant pieces of criticism on Lewis Carroll in the areas which I will be researching have been described. In the next section, I will state how these critics' ideas will or will not be applied to my studies in order to answer the questions referring to the fantasy content of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass.

1.3. Statement of Purpose

This dissertation aims to analyse some of the possible fantasy contents of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. Within this context its main goal is to stress Lewis Carroll's preoccupation with freedom of individual thought in these books. The starting point for such an assertion is Carroll's nonsense viewed and studied as a means to achieve the intellectual liberty professed by him in his creative stories. Also, this dissertation intends to emphasize the importance given by Carroll to themes such as fantasy, magic and imagination. For they are, in Carrollian terms, the necessary paths to nonsense and to free and non-conditioned thinking. It is important to stress, also, that free and non-conditioned thinking is a requirement for the

individual plenitude which characterizes Carroll's understanding of adulthood.

Another point which this dissertation aims to analyse is Carroll's view of human social organizations which is mainly related to his skill for humour and satire. For Carroll not only criticizes the repression imposed on individual reasoning by forms of organization of society but also characterizes the arbitrariness present in social institutions and their tendencies to one and only one form of reasoning and thinking. But, again, nonsense has to be mentioned for it is the seed of humour and satire in Carroll's 'Alices' since it is created by the confrontation of logics which are not compatible and this incompatibility generates the atmosphere of comedy and absurdity of the books.

On the whole, the important point which all these studies would like to show is that through magic, fantasy, and nonsense Carroll has enriched his readers, for he has given them the notion of hope in one's own capacity to re-create a social and individual reality with originality and liberty. For the books of 'Alice' provide the reader the satisfaction of seeing portrayed the most inherent feature of both adults and children: the belief in one's personal capacity to reason based on his/her intellectual power. This notion of hope is, perhaps, the most important gift to the readers of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass; it is probably its most relevant fantasy content.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1
COVENEY, Peter. - Fantasy as Escape. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 331

2
Ibid. p. 337

3
GREENACRE, Phyllis. - Reconstruction and Interpretation. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 427

4
Ibid. p. 421

5
GOLDSCHMIDT, A.M.E. - Alice in Wonderland Psychoanalysed. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 282

6
Schilder, Paul. - Psychoanalitic Remarks on Alice in Wonderland. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 283-292

7
SKINNER, John. - Lewis Carroll's Adventures in Wonderland. In: Aspects Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p.307

8
GREENACRE, Phyllis. - The character of Dodgson as Revealed in the Writings of Carroll. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 331

9
BURKE, Kenneth. - Comments on the Imagery of Catharsis in Literature. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 341

10
FENICHEL, Otto. The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1945. p. 50

11
SEGAL, Hanna. Introdução à Obra de Melanie Klein. São Paulo, Companhia Editora Nacional, 1966. p. 7

12
BETTELHEIM, Bruno. - The Uses of Enchantment. New York, Randon House, 1976.

13
AVERY, Gillian. - Fairy Tales with a Purpose. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition, New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 323

14
AVERY, Gillian. - Fairy Tales for Pleasure. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition, New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 325

15
Ibid. p. 329

16
LEACH, Elsie. - Alice in Wonderland in Perspective. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975.

17
LENNON, Florence Becker. - Escape Through the Looking Glass. In: Aspects of Alice, New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 71

18
HUXLEY, Francis. The Raven and the Writing Desk. Hampshire, BAS Printers Limited, 1976. p. 10

19
SEWELL, Elizabeth. - The Balance of Brillig. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 383

20
HOLMES, Roger. - The Philosopher's Alice in Wonderland. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 159-174

21
WILSON, Edmund. - C. L. Dodgson: The Poet Logician. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 202

22
SPACKS, Patricia Meyer. - Logic and Language in Through the Looking Glass. In: Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 267-275

23
PITCHER, George. Wittgenstein, Nonsense and Lewis Carroll. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 402

24
HOLQUIST, Michael. - What is a Boojum? Nonsense and Modernism. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p.415

25
HUDSON, Derek. - Lewis Carroll; an illustrated biography, New York, Clarkson N. Potter, Inc, 1977.

26
MILNER, Florence. - The Poems in Alice in Wonderland. In: Aspects of Alice, New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 252

27
CIARDI, John. - A Burble Through The Tulgey Wood. In: Aspects of Alice, New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 257

28
PRIESTLEY, J.B. - A Note on Humpty Dumpty. In: Aspects of Alice, New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 262-266

LEWIS CARROL AND

THE 'ALICE BOOKS'

2.1. LEWIS CARROLL

It is not possible to talk about Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass[1] without talking a little bit about the life of the one who conceived such imaginative stories: Lewis Carroll. For, believe it or not, the nature of Lewis Carroll's life is closely linked with the fantastic world of both Wonderland and Looking Glass. To know Lewis Carroll's life is to understand the roots of the imaginative power which makes it possible for us, today, to enjoy and appreciate the fantasies of a widely considered character of literature: Alice. The understanding of Lewis Carroll's personality adds a lot to the understanding of the worlds he created. Let us, therefore, summarize Lewis Carroll's life paying close attention to the instances which concern the writing and the history of the Alice books.

Lewis Carroll's real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. He was born on January, 27, 1832 at the parsonage of Daresbury, Cheshire. Carrol was the third child and the eldest son of the eleven children of the Rev. Charles Dodgson and Frances Jane Lutwidge. The family was very religious and traditional and had a strong sense of loyalty and service. Also, it is said that Carroll's family had a certain pride in what concerns social status although it seems that in many

instances they saw themselves in situations of financial difficulties. It was a conservative family whose members, surprisingly enough, were full of originality and imagination. It is agreed that Carroll's devotion to nonsense was clearly influenced by his father who was also a nonsense adept. During his childhood, Lewis Carroll was very fond of theater presentations. Actually, in spite of criticism from his family and friends who considered theater-going a mundane activity, Carroll remained a theatergoer all his life time. Carroll conducted his brothers and sisters in many family performances and even constructed a little stage for the troup of marionettes he had made and for whom he wrote plays. The most popular being The Tragedy of King John and La Guida di Bragia, a ballad opera.

Very soon Carroll started writing poems and stories which appeared in the family magazines which he also illustrated. The first of these manuscripts was Useful and Instructive Poetry which was followed by The Rectory Magazine, The Comet, The Rosebud, The Star, The Will-O' The Wisp and The Rectory Umbrella.

At the age of twelve Carroll went to Richmond Grammar School, and in 1848 he went to Rugby where he stayed, in spite of his dislike for the place, till 1850. By that year he went back home to prepare for Oxford. He remained at home for a year and went into residence as a Commoner at Christ Church, Oxford, on January 24, 1851. Carroll was to spend his life in Christ Church with only

some short vacations away and a trip abroad to Moscow which he did not enjoy.

It seems that Lewis Carroll's childhood and boyhood were very repressed for his family worshipped traditional Victorian dogmas as, for example, the sense of duty, organization and work. As a boy and a young man Carroll had little room to exercise his imaginative power in his everyday life. Maybe this is one of the reasons why he started very early to create so abundantly in the literary field. We find in Lewis Carroll's early years the same kind of Victorian repression which we find in Alice, for in this aspect author and character identify. I personally believe that such a repressive life has influenced Carroll to write the 'Alice' books in an attempt to get away from the lack of emotion and originality of ideas which this life imposed on him. Actually, Carroll always tried to purge his spirit from the boring and over-organized traditional concepts of the Victorian age concerning intellectuality: his love for the theater, for the writing of scripts, poems and stories, the publishing of the family magazines and later on his extreme dedication to photography are only some examples of the many ways he found to satisfy his spirit and its willingness to achieve a purer and more original intellectuality. But Carroll's biggest flight was with the 'Alice' books and his previous attempts, somehow, prepared him better for this great jump into the world of imagination.

But together with such occasional imaginary escapes Carroll

developed a passion for logic and mathematics which occupied lots of his time. He was very concerned with logic and published books of puzzles and riddles (the concern with logic is also to be found in the 'Alice' books as we are going to see later).

At first sight, it may sound contradictory that Lewis Carroll worried about logic and mathematics as well as about fantasy, imagination and nonsense. I tend to consider this fact not as contradiction or as a split in the author's personality but as a relation of cause and consequence. For Carroll seemed to believe that illusions, fantasy and nonsense were products of a free mind which could achieve, through a personal and logical set of ideas and values, the satisfaction of mastering its own and proper reasoning and creative power. From this combination of logic and fantasy the 'Alice' books came to life and we are going to see that we are to find both in Alice in Wonderland as in Through the Looking Glass representations of this duplicity of the author. But the logic and organization which Carroll sponsors in his 'Alice' books is not the logic and organization which ruled Victorian society; on the contrary, Carrollian logic is marked by an ingeniousness of thought and a praise of personal reasoning which were avoided by the more dogmatic thinkers of Carroll's age.

Carroll developed into a good mathematician but not an extremely brilliant one, nevertheless he published many books concerning the study of mathematics. As a teacher he did not feel comfortable because of his stammering (which

also prevented him from doing parochial work). He had few adult friends and never married. He could only feel at ease with children and it was with them and for them that his mind would produce his best. Carroll enjoyed, mainly, the company of little girls and among the huge number of his child friends the most important one, no doubt, was Alice Liddell, the little girl to whom the 'Alice' books were written.

Alice Liddell and her sisters Lorina and Edith were the daughters of the Oxford Dean and Carroll made their acquaintance in 1856. By this time he was already dedicating himself to photography and his hobby (Carroll was later on to be considered one of the best amateur photographers of his time) was an excuse for approaching the recently arrived family. Many times he photographed the Liddell children and the only person who seemed to be against the friendship between Carroll and the Liddell girls was Mrs. Liddell, who found Carroll's persistence in photographing her daughters a real nuisance. But, despite Mrs. Liddell's opposition to the association of her children with Carroll, they soon became good friends and took many trips together, the most famous one being dated July 4, 1862 when Carroll told them, mainly for the sake of Alice, the fairy tale of Alice's Adventures Underground.

Nevertheless, the friendship which gave birth to one of the masterpieces of literature was soon to fade away since Carroll did not have the same love for adolescents

as he had for little girls. So, as Alice became a teenager her encounters with Carroll started to diminish but the two never lost contact and exchanged letters during Carroll's entire life. After Alice Liddell, Carroll had many child friends and was always an appreciated figure in children's gatherings, but none of these other child friends inspired him as much as Alice Liddell did.

Lewis Carroll dedicated his life and genius to children. His interest in dealing with fantasy and nonsense is the interest we find in every child. But, it seems that for Carroll fantasy and nonsense, as a product of free reasoning, had a special and determined function. It is as if Carroll had created fantasy and nonsense to escape from the dull and repressively organized Victorian way of life that he had to lead. It seems that the writing of the 'Alice' books provided Carroll the emotional and intellectual excitement that was not be found in his daily life. Carroll's interest in fantasy and nonsense seems to come from his own personal need to disarrange the intellectual and emotional order which had been imposed on him not only by his family and society but by him, himself. For Carroll had an obsessive character and he did not permit himself to react emotionally to anything. But he has done so both in the actual writing of the 'Alice' books as in the creation of their plots, where logicality, in Carrollian terms, and illogicality overlap in a relation of cause and consequence.

2.2. The 'Alice' Books

The history of the 'Alice' books starts officially on the afternoon of July 4, 1862. On that day Carroll had some friends for lunch, after their departure he changed his black clothes for more casual ones and in the company of Robinson Duckworth (then a fellow of Trinity and later sub-Dean and Canon of Westminster), Ina, who was thirteen years old, Alice, who was ten, and Edith, who was eight, set off for Folly Bridge. There the Liddell sisters and the men chose their boat and started their journey. It is not exactly known when Carroll started telling the girls the story of Alice's Adventures Underground but Duckworth has reported that "it was composed at the time for the benefit of Alice Liddell."[1] Duckworth has also reported that he remembered turning around and saying: "Dodgson, is this an extempore romance of yours?" To which Carroll replied: "Yes, I'm inventing as we go along."[2] Later on when the party returned to Oxford and both men walked the girls back to the Deanery, Alice said, as reported by Duckworth, "oh, Mr. Dodgson, I wish you would write the Alice's adventures for me," to which Carroll replied that he would try.[3]

On the next day Carroll went to London, but he did write the headings of Alice's Adventures Underground; in the following month, Carroll heard

the three Liddells sing "Beautiful Star" which was parodied in Alice in Wonderland under the title "Turtle Soup". It is not known if Carroll had been working on his manuscript or not but on November 13 of the same year he wrote in his diary entry - "Began writing the fairy tale for Alice, which I told them July 4, going to Godstow - I hope to finish it by Christmas."[4] What is sure is that by February 1863 Carroll finished writing his manuscript and was advised by some friends to publish the story. By that time Carroll started two new enterprises: he began writing a longer version of his Alice's Adventures and started to illustrate himself the manuscript for Alice. In the Autumn of 1864 Carroll finished the illustration of the manuscript and in November of the same year Alice received it at the Deanery. By then, Carroll had finished the enlarged version of his Alice's Adventures and had chosen a new title for it: Alice in Wonderland because he thought that Alice's Adventures Underground sounded "too like a lesson book about mines."[5] Carroll had also contacted John Tenniel, a Punch artist, to do the drawings of Alice in Wonderland; Tenniel agreed and by July 1865 the first edition was ready. Alice Liddell received a vellum-bound copy.

Alice in Wonderland was a very succesful book at the time it was first published but its success was not spectacular Little by little the story of Alice became known and was spread all over the world. During Carroll's lifetime about 159,000 copies of Alice in Wonderland were printed in England. In 1911 the number of copies printed

by Macmillan was 733,750 but as the copyright expired in 1907 it is not possible to know the exact number of copies published up to the present. What is certain is that Alice crossed the British border very early in 1869 it was translated to German and French and in 1872 to Italian. After that many other translations followed.

Nevertheless, despite the problems and difficulties that the publishing of Alice in Wonderland brought to Carroll, he was already thinking, in 1866, about writing another story with the same character: Alice. The basic trouble, then, was to find someone to do the illustrations since Tenniel, because of Carroll's fussiness, had stated that he was not interested in illustrating books anymore. But due to Carroll's persistence, Tenniel finally agreed on doing the drawings. That was in 1868 and only then Carroll embarked on the writing of the story he was calling Looking Glass House. The text was finished in the following year, but the publishing was delayed because of some questions related to the poem "Jabberwocky." First Carroll wanted the whole poem to be printed in reverse. Macmillan, the editor, had a hard time convincing Carroll that it would be too difficult for the reader to read two entire pages in front of a mirror. Also, Carroll did not know where to place Tenniel's horrific picture of the Jabberwock. He could not decide if the picture was to come on the front page or in the middle of the book, where the poem occurs. Carroll solved the problem by sending some of his lady friends a picture of the Jabberwock with a

questionnaire concerning the ideal place for the drawing in the book. Through the Looking Glass and What Alice found There was published in 1871(*). In 1893 it was reported that the book was in its sixtieth thousand copies.

2.3. The plots of "Wonderland" and 'Looking Glass'

After telling the history of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass, it is important for us to review briefly the plots of the books so that we can situate ourselves within the plots and explore them better. In the next paragraphs I will also discuss differences and similarities between both books. I will be talking about size changing scenes, that is, scenes where Alice changes her size becoming bigger or smaller and I will also be talking about transformation scenes, that is, scenes where Alice, as in a magic trick, changes from one place to another.

Both Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass start in situations where Alice finds herself extremely bored and annoyed by the fact that she has nothing exciting to do. In Wonderland we first find Alice outside with her sister who reads a book which, as Alice remarks, has no pictures. In Looking Glass she

---

(*) The picture of the Jabberwock appears by the poem's side.

is penned indoors because of heavy rain and the only company she has is her little cat. In Alice in Wonderland the solution, the escape from such a state of annoyance, is found through the act of falling through a rabbit hole; in Through the Looking Glass the same escape is found by going through a glass mirror. In both books after the "passage," Alice finds herself in another world. The first is an underground world, the second is a reversed one. In both stories Alice is by herself; alone she meets strange individuals and sees herself in difficult situations. It is important to remark here that both Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass are actually dreams of the character so we could say that the real escape is not falling through a rabbit hole or going through a glass mirror, but dreaming. Then, the actual "passage" would be a passage from states: that is, Alice passed from a state of being awake to a state of dreaming and that can be one of the bases for the understanding of both plots. So, we have the dreams and Alice's fantasies within the dreams as a escape valve from the apparent impotence of a child. The act of dreaming and of creating fantasies is the basic pattern of both plots which can be understood as the representations of the unconscious of a child.

The adventures of Alice in Wonderland and in Through the Looking Glass are beautiful and imaginative fantasies of what she could and would be doing if she were not constrained by family, tradition, society and culture.

In other words, the dreams of Alice and her fantasies exist as symbols of the capacity of imagination of a child linked with her perception, feelings and with the constraints of the outer world. Also, I believe that Carroll had a certain method of organizing these fantasies, for we can trace a parallel between the plots which shows that what vary are the representations, the symbols the author used to convey basically the same core fantasies. For both Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass portray the fantasies and struggles of growing up, and in both stories Alice faces the delusion of being frustrated by a world which she worked hard to become part of. For Alice represents in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass the troubled child who is still searching for her identity and for a place in society. I do not want to discuss this problem in detail here for I am going to do that in a section dedicated to fantasy. My aim here is to make clear that in the 'Alice' books what differs is the symbology used by the author to convey the same pattern of troubles: the conflicts of growing up.

One of the characteristics of Alice in Wonderland is that Alice changes size many times. After she has fallen through the rabbit hole, she sees a beautiful garden and wants to enter into it, but she cannot because she is too big to go through the door. Then, she sees a bottle and drinks from it; as a result she becomes small but still she cannot get into the garden, since now

she is too little to reach the key which is on a table. This is the first size-changing scene in Alice in Wonderland and it is not a very happy one because even changing her size Alice cannot achieve her aim: to enter into the garden. My objective here is not to explain in detail the size-changing scenes for I am going to do that later on in a chapter dedicated to fairy-tales, dreams and fantasy. I only want to stress here the fact that those scenes are a constant in the plot of Alice in Wonderland just as the transformation scenes are a constant in Through the Looking Glass.

So, frustrated because she could not get into the garden, Alice leaves the place, meeting the White Rabbit again who passes her leaving behind him his fan and one of his white gloves. As Alice holds the White Rabbit's fan she starts to get small again and finds herself in a pool of tears which she had cried when she was bigger. As she swims in her tears she meets several birds and a mouse who tells her his sad tale in the graphic format of a tail. As she leaves those friends she again meets the White Rabbit who takes her for his housemaid and orders her to go and fetch his pair of gloves and his fan. Alice does as she is told and enters the White Rabbit's house where she is to change size again by drinking from a magic bottle. This time Alice becomes enormous and can hardly fit into the house. This fact astonishes the White Rabbit who, together with some other animals, start to throw stones into the house. The matter is that as those pebbles reach

the White Rabbit's floor they turn into cakes and Alice eats them turning small again. Turning smaller Alice runs away from the house and meets a caterpillar sitting on a mushroom. Alice starts to talk to him and he makes her repeat the poem "You Are Old Father William." But, Alice is not interested in poetry, she wants to go back to her natural size. She explains her problem to the caterpillar who advises her that if she would eat from one side of the mushroom she would get bigger and if she would eat from the other side she would get smaller. The problem is that a mushroom being round, Alice is not sure of which is one side and which is the other side. She solves this problem by putting her arms around the mushroom and taking small bits from each side with her hands. Then, Alice tastes from one bit and gets extremely tall, her neck becomes so long that she has to take care so as not to get injured or stuck among the trees. It is then that a pigeon takes her for a serpent and she has a hard time trying to explain to it that she is a little girl. After this episode Alice eats from the other bit till she gets to her right size.

Feeling much more comfortable because she is now her normal size Alice happens to find herself by the Duchess' house. She enters the house and is amazed by the way people treat each other in that home, mainly by the brutal way the Duchess treats her own baby. Finally, the Duchess gives the baby to Alice so that she can nurse it. Alice goes outside because she finds the odor of pepper very unpleasant and thinks it is the reason why

the baby is so nervous. But as Alice walks outside and looks at the baby, she finds that she does not have a baby in her arms anymore but a pig, so she lets it escape. Alice, then, meets the Cheshire Cat who has the strange power of disappearing and reappearing at different places. After that Alice goes to the March Hare's tea where she also meets the Mad Hatter and the Dormouse who strike her as being the maddest creatures she had ever met. As Alice leaves the March Hare, the Mad Hatter and the Dormouse, she finds herself by the door which leads to the garden. Thus, she picks up the key by the table and starts eating her pieces of mushroom (for she had saved some) till she is the right size to go through the little door. Nevertheless, what Alice had thought to be a beautiful garden is actually the Queen of Hearts' Croquet ground.

From the moment Alice sees herself in the Queen's croquet ground she starts to go through the most nonsensical situations in the whole book. It is in this part of the story that Alice meets the over-exaggerated omnipotence of the Queen, the Cheshire Cat's ironic power and it is also in this part of the narrative that Alice has to listen to extremely nonsensical poetry. Alice meets the Duchess again and has to listen to her nonsense morals and subsequently, with the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, she is obliged to listen to the Mock Turtle's sad story concerning his education. But the Mock Turtle is not happy with only one story, so he and the Gryphon

decide to sing and dance for Alice "The Lobster Quadrille" and finally the Mock Turtle sings Alice a song "Turtle Soup" which is actually a parody of the nursery song "Beautiful Star." But, as the Turtle is singing "Turtle Soup" Alice and the Gryphon hear a voice calling people for the trial because the Queen's tarts had been stolen and the knave was accused of having stolen them.

At the trial Alice changes size again: this happens when the Mad Hatter is giving his evidence. The trial is chaotic and one can feel that there is no aim to prove the truth; there is not even a strong concern with the truth. The trial exists for itself and it seems a parody of human courts. The only thing that is certain is that the Queen's will is always to be followed no matter what the evidence has proved. By the end of the trial Alice is called as witness to give her evidence, but by this time she is already angered at the situation, so she faces the King and questions his words. Alice has lost her temper and when the Queen says, "sentence first - verdict afterwards", Alice revolts and offends the soldiers. She says - "you're nothing but a pack of cards."[6] As Alice says this, the whole pack of cards, the Queen of Hearts' soldiers, rises up in the air and starts attacking Alice. However, Alice wakes up and realizes she had been dreaming. She tells her dream to her sister and goes to have her tea.

In Through the Looking Glass, however, Alice does not change size; what is characteristic of the plot in the sequel to Alice in Wonderland are the transformation

scenes, that is, scenes which suddenly change into other scenes. This fact happens in Through the Looking Glass because the story is structured as if it were a chess game and as Alice goes from one square to another, the reality which she is experiencing changes completely. It is important to remark that the use of such technique makes the reality of Looking Glass world seem more fantastic and magical. Again my aim is not to discuss these transformation scenes in detail, for I am going to do that in a chapter dedicated to magic. What I want to stress is that the transformation scenes are peculiar and constant in the plot of Through the Looking Glass in the same way that the size-changing scenes are a constant in the plot of Alice in Wonderland.

Alice's objective in Through the Looking Glass is, then, to reach the eighth square and become Queen Alice. As she goes through the looking glass she finds the Red King and the Red Queen for the first time and they are considerably smaller than Alice herself. After this scene Alice walks out of the house and goes to the garden of live flowers. After talking to the flowers, Alice meets the Red Queen again, now in her normal size. It is interesting to notice that in Through the Looking Glass this is the only scene where someone changes size as happens so much in Alice in Wonderland. The difference lays in the fact that it is not Alice but the Red Queen who changes size. We could even say that this initial size-changing scene occurs as an influence from Alice in Wonderland.

Alice, then, meets the Red Queen who shows her the country which is a huge chess board and Alice states that she is willing to participate in the game. Then, the Red Queen explains the game to Alice and the steps she has to go through to pass from Pawn to Queen. That is when the story really begins and as soon as the Red Queen disappears Alice finds herself in a train. This is the first transformation scene in the book and many will follow as we will see. In the carriage, the creatures talk and think in chorus and everyone seems to be against Alice except an insect which she, later on, finds to be a gnat. The gnat introduces Alice to some Looking Glass insects and in this scene the theme of names as arbitrary signs appears for the first time. But, then, all of a sudden, the gnat is not seen by Alice anymore and she sees herself arriving in an open field. Soon, however, she enters the wood where things have no names. In the wood, Alice cannot remember her name and she meets a fawn which cannot remember its name either. They become friends and walk out of the wood together, but as they leave the wood they remember who they are and the fawn runs away from Alice, frightened. Alice keeps on walking and meets Tweedledum and Tweedledee. While in their company Alice meets the Red King who is sleeping. Tweedledum and Tweedledee then explain to Alice that she is not real but only a character in the Red King's dream. Continuing her journey Alice meets the White Queen who introduces her to the idea of reversed time. As they cross a brook, the

Queen's figure turns into an old sheep and Alice finds herself in a shop.

While talking to the sheep Alice notices that she is not in a shop anymore but that they are both on a boat. Alice is very surprised and does not believe her eyes. Nevertheless, as she is beginning to believe that she is in the middle of real water, another transformation scene occurs, and both Alice and the old sheep find themselves back in the shop. Alice then buys herself an egg but as she is reaching for it on a shelf it turns out to be Humpty Dumpty and the theme of names as arbitrary signs occurs again. Actually the theme of language as a set of arbitrary signs seems to be a common concern of Carrol, mainly in Through the Looking Glass, for he refers to it many times. In reality, Carroll as one interested in logic, has enough reasons to worry about the lack of logic of language signs, for those signs work as part of a disconnected code which does not show any link between form and content.

Leaving Humpty Dumpty Alice meets the White King who takes her to town where the Lion and the Unicorn are fighting for the Crown. Alice makes their acquaintance and they teach her how to manage Looking Glass cakes: one offers them first and cuts them afterwards. As Alice leaves them and crosses another brook she meets the White Knight who rescues her from the Red Knight in a curious and nonsensical fight. The White Kninght then shows Alice what he calls his inventions and accompanies her out of the wood singing a song whose name she could not get due to

Carroll's semantic play with words and meanings. The White Knight makes a distinction between how the song is called, its name and what it really is. It is important to remark here that there is a close identification between the White Knight and Carroll himself for the White Knight is a kind of Don Quixote who just like Carroll lives in solitude inventing nonsensical apparatus which do not have any important significance, but which are good mental exercises and interesting mind games. Also, as I am going to develop later on in this dissertation, this is the only scene where we can notice feelings between two human beings, that is feelings of love and friendship.

Finally, Alice reaches the eighth square and becomes Queen Alice. She then encounters the Red Queen and the White Queen who treat her in a rude way and ask her a number of nonsense questions which Alice cannot answer. Then, both Queens fall asleep and disappear. Another transformation scene occurs and Alice sees a big door with the words Queen Alice on it. She enters and there is a dinner party going on in her honour. But Alice cannot eat the food for it is alive and she is even socially introduced to it. Nevertheless, the worst is still to happen, for, all of a sudden, as in a nightmare, things start flying in all directions, the White Queen disappears in the soup and her place on the table is taken by a muton leg. Alice is nervous and mad and decides to pull the tablecloth crying: "I can't stand it any longer!"[7] Then, turning to the Red Queen, who Alice considered responsible for all the

confusion, she finds out that the Queen is now the size of a doll. Here again we go back to the theme of size-changing scenes. As I said in the beginning of this discussion of the plot of Through the Looking Glass the Red Queen is the only character who changes size in this book. This fact might be explained through two different approaches. First, it could be an influence from Alice in Wonderland where these scenes happen a lot. Second, it could be a way Carroll found to explain the dream of Alice since, as we will see, the Red Queen turns into Alice's little cat as she wakes up. So, the size-changing scenes in Through the Looking Glass might be seen as a device used by the author so that reality could explain the dream of Alice.

Going back to the plot of Through the Looking Glass itself, we will find that Alice is still nervous and so, takes the Red Queen in her hands and starts to shake her madly till she turns into a little cat: Alice's kitten. As the Queen is turning into Alice's cat, Alice wakes up and realizes she had been dreaming. Nevertheless, Alice is still worried for she wants to discover whose dream it was, hers or the Red King's. So she tells her dream to her cat and questions it on the matter of whose dream it was. But her attempt proves to be a failure for the kitten cannot answer anything. Carroll then turns, the question to the reader and ends the book with the chapter "Which dreamed it?", which is obviously an appeal for the reader's participation in the plot.

After this brief summary of the 'Alice' stories, I think we can go back to my basic idea of a close resemblance between the plots of the 'Alice' books. For now the reader can understand better my idea that both books deal with certain core fantasies which happen to be the same, fantasies which are related to the struggles of growing up, with the problems of attaining a proper and original personality. But the point is that even being basically the same, those fantasies are given literary structure and are organized through a different set of symbols and meanings.(*)

My point is that consciously or unconsciously Lewis Carroll, when writing the 'Alice' books, managed to convey in both books a specific and similar part of human experience. He established for himself, for his style and for his stories' verisimilitude, a set of events which the reader would easily accept and translate to his/her own experience. That is, Carroll proved his genius by being able to convey basic aspects of human experience (core fantasies) in a way which the reader accepts. In other words, Carroll has achieved a socially respectable transmutation of material that was repressed not only in himself but in all of us.

(*) I am not saying that Lewis Carroll had a fixed pattern of building up a story or that he lacks originality, for this is not true. Carroll has many other works published as Sylvie and Bruno which came out in two parts (1889, 1893), Phantasmagoria and Other Poems (1869), Rhyme ? and Reason ? (1883), A Tangled Tale (1885) and the famous poem The Hunting of the Snark (1876). All these books, although full of semantic and logic games just like the 'Alice' books, differ completely from them in what concerns plot structure.

But, most important of all, and that is my point here, Carroll has been able to transform the same core fantasies into two different and socially acceptable meanings and not in only one.

Sebastião Uchoa Leite in his introductory essay to the recent Brazilian edition of the Alice books - O que a Tartaruga disse a Lewis Carroll - presents a chart which establishes a parallel between the plots of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. I believe that this chart is a good illustration for my idea of plot analogy, although I agree that it leaves a lot out for Uchoa Leite remains concerned with the facts while I am interested in core fantasies. But the point is that the same core fantasies are represented in both books, so let's try to find out, first, how they are represented. Later on, in a chapter dedicated to fantasy we will develop further those ideas and concepts.

WONDERLAND	LOOKING GLASS
1. Alice falls through a rabbit hole (chap. 1)	1. Alice goes through the looking glass (chap. 1)
2. Alice talks to the animals (chap. 2, 3)	2. Alice talks to the flowers (chap. 2)
3. Alice talks to the Caterpillar which is sitting on a mushroom (chap. 5)	3. Alice talks to Humpty Dumpty who is sitting on the top of a high wall (chap. 6)
4. Alice meets and challenges the Queen of Hearts (chap. 7)	4. Alice meets and contradicts the Red Queen (chap. 2)

WONDERLAND	LOOKING GLASS
5. Alices doubts her own identity (chap. 2, 5)	5. Alices loses her identity in the woods (chap. 3)
6. Alice asks for the way (chap. 6)	6. Alice looks for a way (chap. 3)
7. Alice meets and challenges again the Queen of Hearts, at the trial (chap. 12)	7. Alice meets and contradicts again the Red Queen at the dinner party (chap. 9)
8. Alice wakes up after a final confusion and remembers her dream (chap. 12)	8. Alice wakes up after the final confusion and remembers her dream (chap. 12)
9. Reality explains the dream (Alice's sister dreams the dream of Alice, chap. 12)	9. Reality explains the dream (Alice talks to her little cat, chap. 12)[8]

Although Carroll has managed to transform the same basic core fantasies in both books, this does not mean that he has written the same story twice. On the other hand, there are a lot of differences in the books, one being already pointed at, the fact that Alice in Wonderland is characterized by the many times Alice changes size while Looking Glass is characterized by transformation scenes. The point I am trying to make is that, although different, Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass deal with similar representations of basic aspects of human experience. This similarity is not a sign of limited originality or creativity, for Carroll proves to be extremely imaginative in the different symbols and

scenes in which he chooses to transmit his meaning.

Carroll even used some reversed patterns which can be understood as differences between the plots or as variants of the same theme, depending on point of view. I, personally, take them as creative variants of the same basic theme, as original symbologies for the same core fantasies, and that is what establishes the differences between the books: the different treatment of the same theme. Sebastião Uchoa Leite , in the same essay previously cited, presents another chart with the oppositions or inversions which we can establish between the Alice books. I quote it here to illustrate my idea of creative variants of the same theme: for Carroll uses different scenes and situations to convey the same basic feelings.

WONDERLAND	LOOKING GLASS
1. Summer (Alice feels hot)	1. Winter (closed window)
2. Open field (Alice is on a bank)	2. Closed room
3. Deep verticality (falling through a rabbit hole)	3. Horizontality - surface
4. Uncontrolled authority (Queen of Hearts)	4. Controlled authority (Red Queen)
5. Hallucinatory nonsense (the Mad Hatter, The March Hare, the Mock Turtle, The Gryphon)	5. Logic and ironic nonsense (Tweedledum & Tweedledee, Humpty-Dumpty)

WONDERLAND	LOOKING GLASS
6. Passive final convulsion (Alice is attacked by the cards)	6. Final active convulsion (Alice pulls the tablecloth)[9]

I believe that by now I have established the basic points of what I wanted to convey, for now the reader is aware of some important events in Carrol's life, in the history of the 'Alice' books, and in the plots of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. These points illustrate the idea of Carroll's basic concern with children and their vision and relation with the outer world. I wanted to stress some points concerning these subjects for I think that when talking about Lewis Carroll and his 'Alice' books two points of great importance have to be considered and stressed.

The first one is that Carroll wrote for children, that is for the child who is inside everyone of us. Carroll's aim was to have a close relationship with children and he did so, as I have pointed out, in literature as in his personal life. Carroll was interested in waking up the child in children and in adults and he had a special skill to do so, for his appeals are so varied that reaction to them is almost sure. That is, both adults and children react to the 'Alice' books but the reaction is of a different nature. The problem is that adults react intellectually to an emotional action while children react emotionally to an emotional

action. The fact that Lewis Carroll needed emotion, fantasy and nonsense in the same way that any Victorian child needed them or in the same way that any adult of any time needs them is a proof that the 'Alice' books present through those subjects certain aspects of our lives which are common and present in everyone, in spite of differences of age and culture. For they are core fantasies which are basic to mankind as a whole.

The second point to be emphasized is the historical nature of Carroll's own time, for I see it as a determining factor in everything previously stated about the author. Carroll had the ability to convey some very emotional and amoral concepts through the 'Alice' books in a culturally accepted way. This was very important, for Carroll was a Victorian and lived in an extremely repressed society where duty and tradition were given the highest value. In Carroll's Victorian England there was little tolerance for serious criticism of the establishment. But Carroll did criticize it through the senses of a child who did not understand why she was forced to lead such a dull life. For Alice's dreams show a willingness for action, fantasy and imagination, although she eventually comes back to her traditional and organized life because, after all it is only a dream. But this fact reveals the Victorian soul's fear of disorder and at the same time its will to dissolve and escape the over-organized society it lived in.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1
HUDSON, Derek. - Lewis Carroll; an illustrated biography. New York, Clarkson N. Potter, Inc, 1977. p. 113

2
HUDSON, Derek. - Lewis Carroll; an illustrated biography. New York, Clarkson N. Potter, Inc, 1977. p. 113

3
Ibid. p. 115

4
Ibid. p. 115

5
Ibid. p. 119

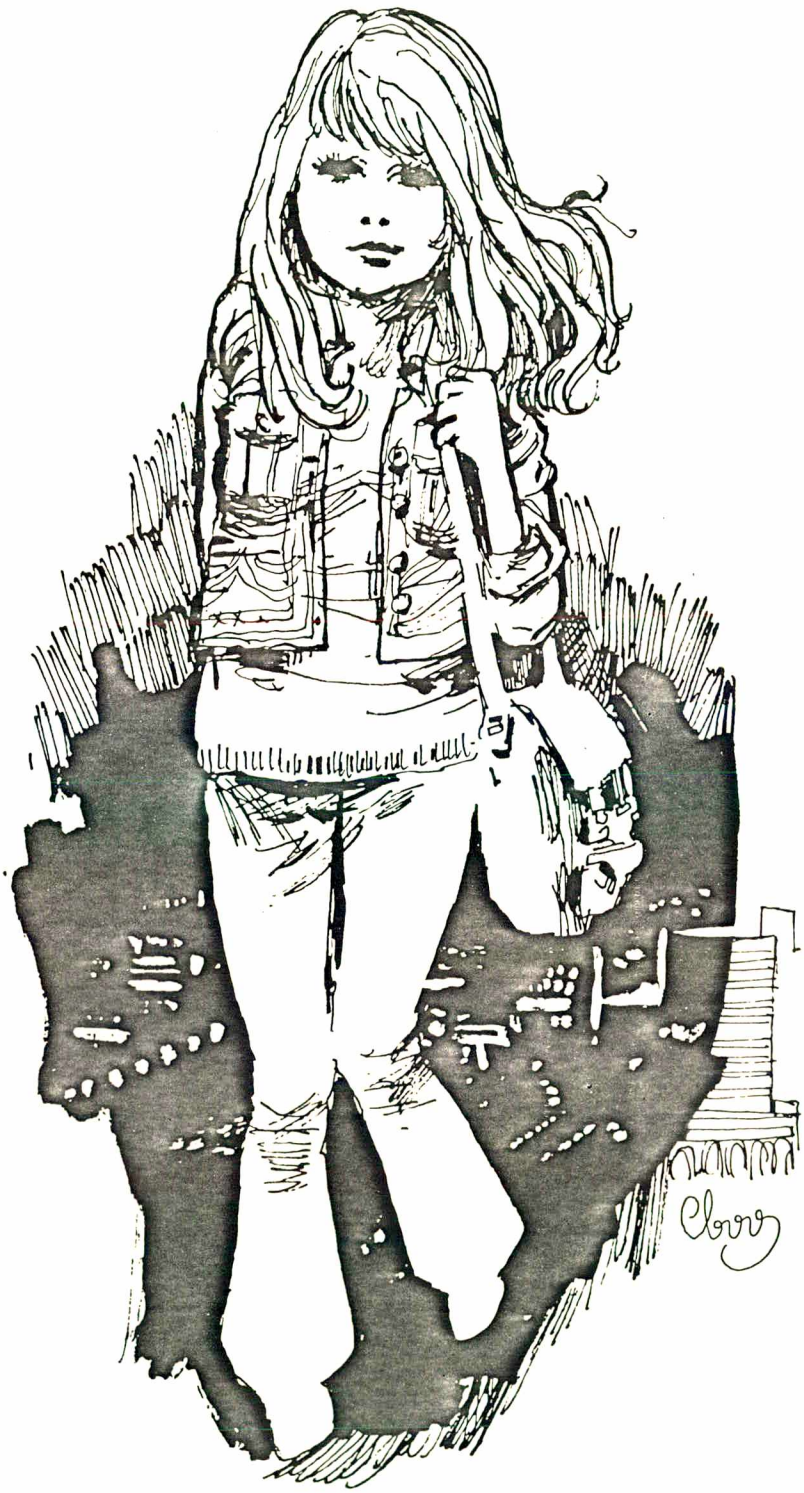
6
CARROLL, Lewis. - Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 97

7
Ibid. p. 204

8
UCHOA LEITE, Sebastião. - O que a Tartaruga disse a Lewis Carroll. In: Aventuras de Alice. Sebastião Uchoa Leite ed. São Paulo, Summus, 1980. p. 10-11.

9
Ibid. p. 12-13.

FANTASY AND THE 'ALICE' BOOKS



3.1. Fairy Tales, Dreams and Fantasy

In this chapter I will discuss the elements of fantasy, dreams and fairy tale as present in the 'Alice' books. As a or introduction I would like to state that when I first thought about such a chapter I had not included the discussion on fairy tales. The idea to introduce this element came to my mind much later: when I realized that the fantasy content of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass could not only be found in the dream-structure of the plot but that, above all, I was dealing with a fairy tale and fairy tales - as we all know - have the inherent capacity to portray fantasies, mainly fantasies of children. In this way, the discussion of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass, as seen from the point of view of fairy tales, was introduced in this chapter due to the awareness that fairy tales share something with dreams: the capacity to represent the unconscious, the capacity to represent inner troubles, dilemmas and desires, the capacity to represent fantasies. Therefore, I will try to discuss the fantasies of 'Alice' as they occur in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass taking into consideration two important points. The first one is that these fantasies happen to be in novels which are structured as dreams of the main character, and thus reason I will try to follow certain general concepts concerning the

organization and function of dreams. I will illustrate this part with Freud's definitions and assertions on dreams. The second important point is that those fantasies are part of universally recognized and accepted fairy tales, for the 'Alice' books are considered masterpieces of children's literature and as such they tend to follow a certain pattern which characterizes fairy tales in general. I will illustrate this part showing some points which are peculiar to and characteristic of fairy tales.

But before developing the discussion on these topics I would like to clarify, very briefly, my own personal tendencies or ideas on the writing of this chapter. I have to confess that when I first started to research on Lewis Carroll and his 'Alice' books the subject which attracted me most was fantasy. The point is, however, that I did not know, by then, what fantasy really was. I somehow, related it to magic, to supernatural powers, to imaginary flights into fairyland, to magic wands, gnomes and beautiful but strange places. In this way, I was amazed to discover that all those elements were present in the 'Alice' books but that their presence was not something casual, on the contrary, the 'Alice' books are logically and anthropologically oriented stories. Of course, I had read both Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass many times during my childhood, but the interesting point is that I was to discover that the feelings and ideas which these early readings had created in me were to match the discoveries of the scientific and objective study. It was then that the relation between

fairy tales and dreams became clear to me, it was then that I realized that they had the same purpose and that they differed basically in the formal aspect, that is, in their specific forms of representing fantasies and inner experiences.

Nevertheless, from this basic difference some others come about and maybe the most important to be stressed here is that fairy tales perform the same psychological function which dreams do. However, while the first applies to the child's more primitive and instinctive mind, the second applies to the adult's more complex and repressed mind. In this way, my tendency during the writing of this chapter will be to consider fairy tales and dreams as similar devices which differ formally but which are very similar in purpose. These devices, I believe, were introduced by Carroll with the aim of communicating deeply with two different groups: adults and children. For whereas fairy tales play with mythical representations which portray concretely what is going on in the child, dreams need to be analyzed and their meaning intellectually assimilated by the adult's more ruled and abstract mind. For dreams represent the adult psyche by disguising meaning, that is, they do not portray directly the individual's inner life but work through symbols which, somehow, hide meaning as well as convey it. I would like to insert a quotation from Bruno Bettelheim's The Uses of Enchantment, for Bettelheim seems to share my point of view in what concerns the similarity of purposes of fairy tales and dreams and he puts it as follows.

> Other investigators with a depth psychological orientation emphasize the similarities between the fantastic events in myths and fairy tales and those in adult dreams and day dreams - the fulfillment of wishes, the winning out of enemies - and conclude that one attraction of this kind of literature is its expression of that which is normally prevented from coming to awareness.[1]

But of course, there are many critics who do not share this idea that is, critics who do not consider the "Alice" books as fairy-tales but as stories which are, at least presently, much more appealing to adults than to children. Among these critics we are to find Sebastião Uchoa Leite who believes Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass to be adult stories and not children's stories.

> Que os dois livros mais celebrados de Carroll, Alice in Wonderland e Through the Looking Glass, sejam livros para crianças, é verdade muito relativa. Na época, talvez. Hoje, mais de um século depois que foram publicados, são cada vez mais leitura para adultos.[2]

3.2. The Fantasies of Alice as Universal Fantasies

In this section I will discuss a certain number of fantasies of Alice as a character. This is not an exhaustive study, for the fantasies in question are all related to the achievement of a stage of emotional and intellectual individual plenitude. Of course, there are many other types of fantasies in the 'Alice' books, but I have chosen to deal only with those which stress the point I want to make about Carroll's understanding of the human soul: its willingness to experience freedom of thought and reasoning without moralistic or academic repressions.

The first scenes which I will discuss in this section are the initial scenes of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. In both stories Alice is in a real situation, falls a sleep and enters into another world: the world of fairyland or the world of dreams. But surely she enters into the world of fantasy. In Wonderland, Alice falls down the rabbit hole and meets an underground world: in Looking Glass, Alice goes through a glass mirror and she

meets a reversed world. Both stories start with the notion of passage, with the notion of the beginning of a fairy tale or of a dream, and both imply the escape from one reality in order to experience a new one. Both fairy tales and dreams allow the individual the capacity to leave a certain reality and take part in a new one which is much more in accordance with the individual's need and inner desires. In this way, the initial scenes of the 'Alice' books portray the fantasy of leaving a state of repression, of leaving a ruled and organized life to enter into the world of adventure and fantasy. This passage portrays the human soul's need to disarrange the reality it lives in order to create a new one which is able to match its inherent capacity to re-create. Alice is a Victorian girl. She feels the oppressive atmosphere of such an age in her still fragile ego, but at the same time she knows that she has a creative power, a power which makes it possible for her to live a reality which is much more actual for her psyche than any other and this power is only ruled by imagination. The child reader identifies with Alice in this sense but the adult reader identifies with the story in the sense, that there is a dream going on, that the fantastic events of Wonderland or Looking Glass which she/he also longs for, can be explained through reality because Alice

will wake up and the needed and desired flight into imagination will be finished.

Freud, in his studies of dreams, has divided dreams in three different and well characterized categories as we can see below. The interesting point, however, is that he claims the dreams of the first category to be more peculiar to children while the dreams of the second and the third category are more characteristic of the adult dreamer.

> ... puedem los sueños dividirse em tres categorías.
> 1. Aquellos que poseen un sentido y que al tiempo son comprensibles; esto es susceptibles de ser incluidos sin violencia en nuestra vida psíquica.
> 2. Un segundo grupo está formado por aquellos sueños que, aunque presentam coherencia y poseen un claro sentido, nos causan extrañeza por no saber como incluir dicho sentido en nuestra vida psíquica.
> 3. Al tercer grupo pertenecem, por último, aquellos sueños que carecem de ambas cualidades - sentido y comprensibilidad, y se nos muestram incoherentes, embrollados y faltos de sentido.[3]

The dreams of Alice would, then, as applied to the child reader, belong to the first category while for the adult reader they would belong to the third category. It is not that the stories of 'Alice' are not fantastic or imaginative enough for children but only that children are

more instinctive and meaning for them can only be grasped through concrete and over-exaggerated scenes which for adults would be fantastic and meaningless. In this way, the fantastic, nonsensical and magical events of the 'Alice' books can be included in children's psychological life without violence, for their meanings are clear for them. The adult reader, on the other hand, will have to look for meanings, will have to distinguish between what Freud calls manifest and latent content of dreams.

> La distinción entre contenido manifesto y contenido latente no tiene desde luego significación más que en los sueños de la segunda e tercera categoría, y especialmente en estos últimos. En ellos es donde surgen aquellos enigmas que no desaparecem hasta que se substituve el contenido manifesto por el contenido ideológico latente.[4]

Freud states that the reason why the ideology of the dream suffers such a distortion is because the individual needs to dream about a certain fact or idea but his censorship is not completely relaxed. So, the dream has to be absurd so that its latent content is not clear. The individual dreams about a certain fact but he hides this fact under the cover of an apparent meaningless dream.

> ...una relácion causal entre la obscuridad del contenido del sueño y el estado de repressión, o sea la incapacidad de devenir conscientes de algumas de las ideas del sueño, me veo obligado a concluir que el sueño tiene de ser obscuro para no revelar las prohibidas ideas latentes. De este modo, llego al conceito que la deformacion del sueño, obra de la elaboración del mismo, puesta al servicio de la ocultación de dichas ideas; esto es del propósito de mantinerlas secretas.[5]

I have inserted those considerations of Freud on dreams and how they operate within the adult mind because I believe something very important has to be mentioned here: the fact that Lewis Carroll somehow knew the differences between the mechanism of representation of fantasies and inner feelings of adults and children. This idea, of course, only came to me after many months of research and studies, but I believe this is the right place to insert it. Lewis Carroll has structured his 'Alice' books both as dreams and fairy tales. In the organization of the dream-structured plots, he conveyed elements which are characteristic of the adult confusing dream. The confusing dream by its turn is not only very familiar to the adult but is, also, a rich source of core representations. Nevertheless, Carroll did not forget children, for the 'Alice' books are

basically fairy tales and as such they match the children's cosmo-vision, communicating openly and naturally with them. Bettelheim in his The Uses of Enchantment describes with accuracy the way fairy tales act upon children.

> The fairy tale proceeds in a manner which conforms to the way a child thinks and experiences the world; this is why the fairy tale is so convincing to him. He can gain much better solace from a fairy tale than he can from an effort to comfort him based on adult reasoning and viewpoints. A child trusts what the fairy story tells, because its world view accords with his own.[6]

I believe that by now the point that Lewis Carroll has, intentionally or by mere chance, organized his books in such a way that they would appeal intensely both to children and adults is set. I am not saying, by any means, that Carroll used scientific knowledge that would only come out many years after his death, but it is amazing, and for sure it is a point in favour of considering him a great artist, that he knew the human soul so well in its different stages of development.

Maybe the most important stage of development in our lives is the one in which we grow up. Of course we cannot consider the process of growing up here as stationary, for maturity, in Carrollian terms, is only achieved, if it

is achieved at all, very late in one's life. Nevertheless as children we feel this process with much more intensity than when we reach the 'so-called' adulthood. One of the most serious dilemmas a child goes through in the process of growing up is related to her/his acceptance in the adult world. The child fears being abandoned by her/his parents, fears having to face the world but at the same time the child's more instinctive side as well as her/his fascination with the outer world makes her/him depart and try to follow her/his own steps. Alice also feels this same inner pressure and one of the fantasies which is pictured in Alice in Wonderland refers to the child's struggle to become part of the adult society, to the child's fantasy of being grown up and independent from the anxieties that the process of growing up imposes upon one.

As I have mentioned in a previous section dedicated to the plots of the 'Alice' books, what is most characteristic of Alice in Wonderland is the many times Alice changes size. In this discussion of the fantasies of Alice I want to go back to that same theme and use the size-changing scenes as illustrations of Alice's struggles to free herself from a repressive and conflict-filled childhood.

In Alice in Wonderland, Alice is a little girl of seven who seems to be quite independent and free for a Victorian child. But since the story is a dream and a fairy tale, both her independence and freedom can be understood

as fantasies of a child who feels the weight of adult, institutionalized society on her shoulders. In an attempt to free herself from such a state of impotence and repression, Alice changes size, but, suprisingly enough, she does not enjoy this process of size-changing either and inevitably wants to go back to her normal size again, that is, to childhood. Clearly we have to distinguish between the actual society (flawed, schizoid and deeply immature) and the maturity that Alice looks for and Carroll seems to praise. The point then would be not merely to fit into the society which Carroll satirizes but to achieve an inner balance which would be the basis of true maturity or proper adult society. The fact that Alice does not enjoy becoming an adult (symbolically represented through her bigger size) relates to an interesting point which is a constant in the 'Alice' books: Carroll's irony and social criticism. For Alice is used by the author as a mirror of Victorian society, hermetic and hypocritical as it was and the fact that she gives her back to it, preferring childhood with all its struggles to the 'so desired adulthood', is a mark of Carroll's irreverence and criticism. Alice wants to go back to where she belongs, that is, to childhood.

> "It was much pleasanter at home," thought poor Alice, when one wasn't always growing larger and smaller, and being ordered about by mice and rabbits. I almost wish I hadn't gone down

> that rabbit hole - and yet - and yet - its rather curious, you know, this sort of life. I do wonder what <u>can</u> have happened to me![7]

Another interesting aspect which has to be mentioned here is that Alice does not change size only once or twice. As the story unfolds she keeps growing larger and smaller as if she were not able to decide which is the best size to be. Alice wants to return to childhood but since she is leading this 'rather curious sort of life',she feels the need to adapt herself to it. The fact that Alice is not able to decide which is the best sort of life for her, the fact that she is divided between adulthood and childhood reveals the split which is characteristic of adolescence. Alice cannot decide whether to remain a child suffering the pressures of an inferior position in society or to face this society and fight for a place for herself. Eventually she decides to remain a child, but her decision is influenced by her disillusionment with the 'so-called maturity.'

But within Alice's main conflict we are to find other troubles which are part of the problem of growing up. One of them is related to the child's desire to change roles with her/his parents. Alice fantasizes over this wish mainly in three scenes in <u>Through the Looking Glass</u>. The first scene in which Carroll portrays Alice's willingness to both help her "parents" and be superior to them is the one where she meets the Red Queen and the Red King for the first time. Alice goes through the glass mirror and finds the royal

couple among ashes. Also they are very little, for they are chess figures. In a reversion of roles Alice feels, then, very maternal towards them. This feeling makes her hold them in her hands to help them get over a table, a task which was a struggle for them because of their size. In this scene we can notice clearly that Alice is satisfying two deep wishes. The first one is related to her desire to overcome figures which, in a way or another, repress her; the second one is related to her motherhood instinct and to her need to give tenderness and protection to beings who are smaller than she Actually Alice is very gentle and careful when she holds them in her hands.

> So Alice picked him up very gently, and lifted him across more slowly than she had lifted the Queen, that she mightn't take his breath away; but, before she put him on the table, she thought she might as well dust him a little, he was so covered with ashes.[8]

The other scene in which Alice reveals her fantasy of role changing occurs when she meets the hysterical White Queen in the forest and has to arrange her dress as if she were a mother caring for a little girl. Alice is patronizingly tender towards the White Queen who is not able to dress herself properly. Alice is, then, the careful mother and the White Queen the clumsy daughter.

> It would have been all the better, as it seemed to Alice, if she had got someone else to dress her, she was so dreadfully untidy. "Every single thing's crooked," Alice thought to herself, "and she's all over pins! - May I put your shawl straight for you?", she added aloud. "I don't know what's the matter with it!" The Queen said, in a melancholy voice. "It's out of temper, I think. I've pinned it here and I've pinned it there, but there's no pleasing it! "It ca'n't go straight. you know, if you pin it all on one side," Alice said as she gently put it right for her; "and dear me, what a state your hair is in!"[9]

Alice's desire to overcome her parents is also present in the scene where she meets the White Knight. Here again we have an inversion of roles since Alice, the child or daughter, is wiser than the White Knight, the adult or father. In comparison with the White Knight Alice is very pragmatic and coherent for the White Knight is a lonely and sclerotic old man whose only activity is to invent meaningless and useless things. In other words, the White Knight is a strange old man who, just like Carroll, fills his life with eccentric inventions in an attempt to bring logic and pragmatism into his nonsensical life. Alice, in her turn, is the well organized Victorian girl who does not understand the lack of aim in the White Knight's errant life. Alice, in

this way, projects in him the fantasy of helping and being superior to an elder who finds in her the care and protection he needed. This fact can be clearly seen in the following scene of Through the Looking Glass.[9]

> He raised his hands in some excitement as he said this, and instantly rolled out of the saddle, and fell headlong into a deep ditch. Alice ran to the side of the ditch to look for him. She was rather startled by the fall, as for some time he had kept on well, and she was afraid that he really was hurt this time. However, though she could see nothing but the soles of his feet, she was much relieved to hear that he was talking in his usual tone. " All kinds of fastness," he repeated: "but it was careless of him to put another man's helmet on - with the man in it, too." "How can you go on talking so quietly, head downwards?" Alice asked as she dragged him out by the feet, and laid him in a heap on the bank.[10]

It is interesting to remark that the scene where we have the meeting between Alice and the White Knight is one of the rare scenes in the 'Alice' books where Alice shows sentiments towards somebody. Through her meeting with the White Knight, then, Alice realizes her fantasy of love as well as her fantasy of superiority. For Alice, in spite of being a child, seems to be in this scene much more emotionally stable than the old man.

Returning to the theme of acceptance in the adult world, I would like to discuss, briefly, the scene in Through the Looking Glass where Alice is in a train but has no ticket to ride. This scene differs from the ones previously discussed

because it does not involve parental relations. The "train" scene is much more concerned with the child's psyche in confrontation with the outer world and not with the family circle. This scene is a typical fairy tale scene in the sense that it characterizes the panic children experience when faced with the outer world. Alice's fear and uneasiness is the fear and uneasiness of every child or adult when confronting a new situation, a situation which has not been inwardly elaborated yet. But Carroll, not satisfied in portraying Alice's feelings in this scene (the feelings of the one who is in an inferior position, the feeling of the one who needs help and friendship to overcome the troubles that the unknown presents), has also portrayed the feelings of the other passengers in the train in an attempt to establish the whole set of inner sentiments which occur in such a circumstance. Carroll, then, managed to create an atmosphere of cruelty radiating from the creatures who are Alice's fellow-passengers. They rejoice over the situation, for they are delighted by the fact that Alice is ignorant about their environment. Alice, then, plays the role of the little fool who is not aware of the secrets of the society she has entered since she is not a member of it. Alice does not belong to the train as we can see in the following scene.

> But the gentleman dressed in white paper leaned forwards and whispered in her ear, "Never mind what they all say, my dear, but take a return

ticket every time the train stops."
"Indeed I sha'n't!" Alice said rather impatiently.
I don't belong to this railway journey at all -
I was in a wood just now - and I wish I could
get back there! [11]

I believe that one of the main points of Alice in Wonderland as well as of Through the Looking Glass is related to the notion of passage, to the worries that the expectation of an adult life brings to a child's mind. Those intense inner worries concerning the passage from one psychological state to another and the sublimation of them are the heart of Alice's fantasies in Wonderland and Looking Glass. All the other fantasies seem to derive from this basic one. For I think that Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass are about growing up and about the variety of social and emotional conflicts one goes through in order to achieve emotional and intellectual maturity.

Some critics and even readers when discussing the fantasies portrayed in the books of 'Alice' mention the fact that Alice's disillusionment with the adult world might be harmful for the social-psychological development of the child reader. I, personally, take this position as vile neo-Freudian moralism since I believe that Carroll is very far from the "psychology of adjustment." I firmly believe that Alice's desillusionment is caused by the fact that the actual adult society does not match Alice's fantasy and

idea of it (which is also Carroll's ideal of maturity).That Carroll criticizes adult and most specifically Victorian institutions is undeniable. He does so by opposing the child's irrationality with adult rationality and control, which is many times in the 'Alice' books only a mask used by the adult characters to dignify their irrationality. But the fact that Carroll praises childhood and even seems to prefer it to adulthood is very different from denying the need that human beings have to achieve a more sophisticated kind of life and reasoning. Carroll simply shows that to become adult means not only changing size but going through an inner process of maturation that will only happen with time, experience and a certain openness to what is new or strange.

Alice's return to childhood does not signify that she is escaping from reality; on the contrary, she faces reality when she returns to her original position. Alice's escape actually happens while she is in Wonderland and the Looking Glass trying to escape from a natural process by attempting to achieve a premature adulthood for which she is not yet prepared. Here we have to mention a very important trait of Carroll as a writer: irony. For Carroll treats with irony and sarcasm both the adult institutionalized world and the young's struggle to become part of it. The humour of the 'Alice' books relies mainly on this virtue of their writer.

A scene which portrays very well Carroll's ironic power when dealing with the confrontation of adult's and children's sentiments is to be found in Alice in

Wonderland. This is the scene where Alice and some animals assemble on a bank to get dry. The group is very happy listening to the mouse who is telling a tale in the format of a "tail". But, the mouse gets upset because Alice does not pay close attention to his story, so he decides to leave. As the mouse leaves a confusion is established because the animals, including Alice, feel guilty for the fact that the mouse has lost its temper.

> "Please come back and finish your story!" Alice called after it. And the others all joined in chorus "Yes, please do!" But the Mouse only shook its head impatiently, and walked a little quicker. "What a pity it wouldn't stay!" sighed the Lory as soon as it was quite out of sight. And an old Crab took the opportunity of saying to her daughter "Ah, my dear! Let this be a lesson to you never to lose your temper!" "Hold your tongue,Ma!" said the young crab, a little snappishly. "You're enough to try the patience of an oyster!"[12]

In this passage, then, we have a good example of Carroll's irony for he is dealing both with the hypocritical side of the young ones and with the hypocritical side of adults. Alice had lost her interest in hearing the mouse's story as had also the other hearers,but still they do not want him to know the truth because it will hurt him. In this

way, they call him back but do not really make any effort to bring him back or to make him stay. After the animals and Alice cry out loud for the mouse we have the interference of the old crab who, among the young ones, represents adulthood. The old crab criticizes the mouse's action because she believes it is hysterical to follow one's feelings as did the mouse. The old crab presents the mouse as an example of lack of control and emotionality to be avoided. It is interesting to remark that in the animal world there is also reaction to adult interference. The young crab criticizes her mother's interference as something tediously characteristic of the old ones who do not always know what is going on but still like to interfere and give their opinion in a moralizing tone.

But what is to be emphasized here is that Alice's attempt to bring the mouse back fails and she is left with the feeling that it has gone away because she did something wrong. But at the same time Alice does not see what she has done wrong, for her error was merely an error of sincerity since she only showed the mouse that she was not much enjoying his story. I think that Alice fails to see her error mainly for two reasons: firstly, she does not have the ability to recognize her more instinctive side (the fact that her desires might hurt somebody); secondly, she does not have the knowledge of the rules adults have created to organize social relations so as to repress and avoid conflicts of this kind. An important point about Alice's personality in general which this scene brings about with emphasis is

that Alice has the tendency to live in a false paradise because she projects her capacity for "evil" outside herself and denies responsibility for this fact. Alice's fantasy, because she does not recognize her more instinctive side, is to forget that such a thing exists inside herself, is to dream that love and friendship, full of romantic and melodramatic sentimentalisms, can last forever. Alice, our little heroine, is eager to be pure, good and loveable. It is a shame that she is not given the opportunity and that the mouse really exits never to return. In this sense, Carroll touches two important points considering Alice's character and human character in general. The first one is that we (like Alice) have a certain tendency not to consider our instincts and desires. The second one is that the instincts and desires we feel (just like Alice's instincts and desires) do not find a place in society's organizations. Carroll is very ironic when conveying well-intentioned Alice's willingness to become adult, but his irony is the irony of one who knows that self-knowledge and recognition of one's dark soul are requisites for one's achievement of a higher stage of existence, that is, maturity in the sense of exploiting individual instincts and desires intellectually and emotionally as original sources of creativity and thinking.

Before finishing this brief discussion on the fantasies of Alice, I would like to touch a point which for me seems extremely relevant: dream language. Of course once the reader gets a certain knowledge of Carroll's nonsense everything seems clear and he/she understands the

books naturally. The problem is that the kind of associations which characterize Carroll's nonsensical language are very similar to the kind of associations which characterize our dreams since they do not follow the established logic. In this sense, Carroll's nonsensical language, with its uses of free associations and mythical representations, is very close to the language used by more modern writers who tried to portray the unconscious with more accurancy; such is the case, for example, of Kafka, Camus, Joyce and Woolf. It is also interesting to remark, but of course this is only a curiosity, that there is a certain similarity of Kafka's and Camus' representations of trials and Carroll's. For in all trials the protagonists' logic and reasoning do not match those of the community, for in all trials the individuals are outsiders whose way of perceiving the world differs from the society's way of perceiving it. But my point here is merely to state that Carroll's nonsensical language follows the same pattern of the language of our dreams because it deals with associations which apparently do not have logic but which are consistent with the way our minds operate. We can prove this point by the similarity that exists between Carroll's style and the style of authors who are universally considered as masters of literature because of their capacity to portray the unconscious through a new literary language. In this way, I believe the cycle leading from fantasy to fairy tales and dreams to be coherent and true in Carroll's 'Alices.'

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1
BETTELHEIM, Bruno. - The Uses of Enchantment. New York, Random House, 1976. p. 36

2
UCHOA LEITE, Sebastião. - O que a Tartaruga disse a Lewis Carroll. In: Aventuras de Alice. Sebastião Uchoa Leite ed. São Paulo, Summus, 1980. p. 7

3
FREUD, Sigmund. - Obras Completas. Madrid, Editorial Biblioteca Nueva, 1973, Tomo I. p. 727

4
Ibid. p. 727

5
Ibid. p. 744

6
BETTELHEIM, Bruno. - The Uses of Enchantment. New York, Random House, 1976. p. 45

7

CARROLL, Lewis. - Alice in Wonderland: a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 28

8

Ibid. p. 114

9

Ibid. p. 149

10

Ibid. p. 185

11

Ibid. p. 131

12

Ibid. p. 26

MAGIC AND THE 'ALICE' BOOKS

4.1. The Magic of the Child and the Magic of the Primitive

Jean Piaget in his The Child's Conception of the World establishes a difference between the use of the term magic by the psychologist and the use anthropology makes of the same term. I believe that the understanding of the differences and similarities which exist in the different fields which occupy themselves with the study of magic and its forms of expression is very important in this chapter since we are going to view magic both as it is found in children and as it is found in the primitive. So, let's return to Piaget and to his definition of the term magic.

> We shall see the term magic for the use the individual believes he can make of such participation (*) to modify reality. All magic supposes a participation, but the reverse is not true. Here again the use of the term magic may be regretted in speaking of the child, but absolutely no identity is implied between the child's magic and the magic of the primitive.[1]

(*) Lévy-Bruhl in his How Natives Think[3] describes participation as follows: "Now there is an element which is never lacking in such relations. In varying forms and degrees they all involve a participation between persons and objects which form part of a collective representation. For this reason I shall, in default of a better term, call the principle which is peculiar to primitive mentality, which governs the connections and the preconnections of such representations, the law of participation.

For Piaget, then, magic corresponds to participation in the environment so that it can be somehow altered. The child can identify with persons and objects of the environment by many different means. Piaget distinguishes between the kinds of participation as follows.

1. There is magic by participation between action and things. The child performs some actions or mental operations (counting, etc) and believes that this action or operation exercises, through participation, an influence on a particular event he either desires or fears. Those actions tend to become symbolical, in the sense that they become detached from their primitive context, just as conditioned reflexes become detached from their objects and become mere signs.

2. There is magic by participation between thoughts and things, when the child is under the impression that reality can be modified by thought, a word or a look, etc., or any psychological characteristic, such as laziness, for example, may be materialised and a lazy person regarded as giving out a substance or force which can act of its own accord. Here again the participation between thought and things gives rise to action which tends to become symbolical.

3. There is magic by participation between objects, when two or more things are regarded as exerting influence on one another, etc., by simple participation, and the magic consists in using one of these things to influence the others.

4. There is magic by participation of purpose. In this case objects are regarded as living and purposive. There is animism. The participation consists in believing that the will of the object can act of itself on that of others and the magic lies in making use of this participation. The most common form is magic by commandment, e.g., ordering the clouds or sun to go away. In the last two cases, also, there is a tendency towards symbolism.[2]

While Piaget distinguishes between the use that psychology and anthropology make of the term magic, anthropologists do not usually establish such a distinction. The Royal Institute of Anthropology of Great Britain in its Notes and Queries on Anthropology(*) defines magic as creeds which do not necessarily presuppose the existence of spiritual beings in what concerns esoteric or supernatural power in contrast to creeds which presuppose them and which are

(*) Translated into Portuguese under the title Guia Prático de Antropologia .

described as religious creeds.

> As crenças que presumem a existência de sêres espirituais são comumente descritas como religiosas, ao passo que as que se referem aos poderes que não pressupõem a necessária existência desses sêres são denominadas mágicas.[4]

I have started this section on magic establishing the definitions which two different areas of human knowledge make of magic because I believe that, at bottom, those definitions are not incompatible. On the contrary, I intend to prove that they refer basically to the same kind of human experience: what differs in the two definitions is the level of treatment, for one refers to the individual while the other alludes to the social. Maybe this point will become clearer as the discussion of the example of magic in the 'Alice' books develops since many of those examples, as we will see later on, cannot be framed as only anthropological or psychological expressions of magic but can be described as having their emphasis on one expression or another. In this way, the expression of magic which we find in Alice in Wonderland and in Through the Looking Glass operates both as representations of the collective understanding of magic, with all its social characteristics which is the objects of study of anthropology, as well as representations of the individual need of magic which expresses itself mainly in what Piaget calls "the magical state" in children and which is the object of

study of psychology.

But there is another level of magic treatment which is present in the 'Alice'books: the one which treats magic as amusement and which is so common in contemporary cultures(**). By combining in the same stories different levels of the same experience Carroll achieves a flexible and universal insight. For magic, as well as fantasy, occurs both in the individual and in society simultaneously. It is not my aim here to establish whether the society influences the individual or whether the individual influcences the society. I believe those aspects should not be disconnected since the individual perception of magic is not something personal and detached, but is a natural phenomenon, a stage of psychological development which we all go through.

In the following section I shall discuss in more detail some examples of magic expression which occur in the 'Alice' books. I shall do so taking into consideration the fact that Carroll gave literary meaning to those expressions using universal symbols and subordinating magic expressions to the basic idea that they are relevant in the way that they represent something inherent and common to man.

(**) I believe that magic as amusement is the modern representation of the magic of the primitive in the so-called civilized society. Nevertheless, this is only a personal perception and it should be considered as such.

4.2. Magical Representations in the 'Alice' Books

The first time the magic theme appears in Alice in Wonderland[5] is in the figure of the White Rabbit. In her dream Alice sees the White Rabbit and follows him down his hole. The rabbit, then, would represent what Jungians call 'the magic animal guide,' but the fact which most strikes me is that the White Rabbit is the actual representation of the magician as anthropology characterizes one. Furthermore, the White Rabbit carries with him the magic symbols of the magician that western culture has stereotyped: a fan and a pair of white gloves. Marcel Mauss in his Sociologia e Antropologia describes the magician and his role in his community in a way which fits the White Rabbit very well.

> Não é mágico quem quer: há qualidades cuja pos se distingue o mágico do comum dos homens. Pre tende-se que o mágico seja reconhecido por cer tas características físicas, que o indicam e revelam, se ele se esconde. Diz-se que nos seus olhos, a pupila devorou a íris, que nela a ima gem reproduz-se invertida. Tais indivíduos têm tudo para serem apontados como mágicos. Trata-se de nervosos, agitados, ou de pessoas de inteligência normal para os meios muito medíocres em que se crê na magia. O gesto brusco, a palavra cortante, dons oratórios ou poéticos

> também fazem os mágicos. Todos esses sinais denotam ordinariamente, um certo nervosismo que, em muitas sociedades, os mágicos cultivam e que é exarcebado no curso das cerimônias... Esses fenômenos nervosos, sinais de dons espirituais, qualificam este e aquele indivíduo para a magia. Chegam os mágicos a ter uma autoridade política de primeira ordem, são personagens influentes, frequentemente consideráveis. Assim a situação social que ocupam predestina-se para exercer a magia e, reciprocamente, o exercício da magia predestina-os a sua situação social.[6]

The White Rabbit matches such a description with accuracy for he is nervous and agitated, and although Carroll treats him with a certain sarcasm, he is still a respectable character in Alice in Wonderland. Actually, Carroll treats most characters with irony and sarcasm, and this is one of the causes of the atmosphere of wit and humour in the 'Alice' books. The White Rabbit has the advantage of being a member of the Queen of Hearts' court. He is the herald of the court and participates actively in the trial, advising the King and even correcting him on some occasions, as in the passage below , and these actions are also characteristics of the magician.

> "Consider your verdict," the King said to the jury.
> "Not yet, not yet!" The Rabbit hastily interrupted. "There's a great deal to come before that!"[7]

The White Rabbit is also a leader, for in the scene where Alice enters his house, in Alice in Wonderland, he sponsors the pebble attack against her so as to make her leave his place. Another interesting point is that there is identification between Carroll and the White Rabbit, for Carroll can also be considered the magician since he is the one who has created the tricks of Wonderland and the Looking Glass. Considering that Carroll is the one who makes Alice fall through the rabbit-hole, we would agree that the one whom Alice follows towards the world of imagination and fantasy is Carroll and not the White Rabbit. Lewis Carroll is the one who makes the Alice who is inside of us go through the rabbit hole or through a glass mirror. He is the one who leads us to the places where we find our core represented.

Another scene in which the theme of magic appears is the one in which Alice, searching for a way to go back to her normal size, meets a caterpillar sitting on a mushroom. The mushroom could represent the essence of magic potions which are commonly used by the 'shaman' to achieve vision and which are to be found in nature. Here, then, the magic power comes from the outside, from nature and not from Alice.

Alice's imagination is not enough since changes in her size require the power of something external to her. The use of the mushroom can be understood as a clear expression of magic in Alice in Wonderland for the belief that a goal can be achieved by the simple use of a formula or object or by the performance of a certain action is also a characteristic of magic. It is interesting to remark that Alice shares this belief in magic and in her attempt to change size she uses a magic potion (mushroom) as a means to achieve her aim. The Royal Institute of Anthropology of Great Britain and Ireland describes the belief in magic, which Alice seems to share, as follows:

> Na magia não se faz nenhum apelo a espíritos. Acredita-se que o fim almejado pode ser atingido diretamente pela própria técnica ritual, isto é, pelo emprego dos atos, objetos ou palavras apropriadas. Crê-se que a ação, a fórmula ou o objeto têm poder dinâmico intrínseco ou são postos em vigor pela vontade de alguém que possui o conhecimento necessário... [8]

Also, magic, as it is understood by anthropology, is to be found in the final scene of Through the Looking Glass. Alice has reached the eighth square and is Queen Alice. She enters a place where there is a banquet going on in her honour. I would like to consider this passage as a ritual of initiation, as a festivity designed to introduce Alice in

the society she has become a member of. The Royal Institute of Anthropology relates festivities and ritual as follows:

> Muito comumente, as festas constituem parte integrante do ritual mas ao mesmo tempo possuem aspectos não religiosos importantes. Festas que, à primeira vista, parecem inteiramente seculares, seguem comumente um padrão ritual ou possuem alguma característica ritual.[9]

Alice, then, attends a ritual of initiation. She has become Queen but she has to become acquainted with the creeds, idols and myths of the society she has just entered. At the banquet, Alice is exposed to the fact that she is not supposed to eat the food she is served, for she is not attending a common banquet but a magical ritual of initiation. In the banquet scene which follows one can also notice the presence of nonsense and certain overtones of cannibalism, but I shall not discuss these aspects here.

> "You look a little shy: let me introduce you to that leg of mutton," said the Red Queen.
> "Alice - Mutton - Mutton - Alice." The leg of mutton got up in the dish and made a little bow to Alice; and Alice returned the bow, not knowing whether to be frightened or amused. "May I give you a slice?" she said, taking up the knife and fork, and looking from one Queen to the other.

> "Certainly not," the Red Queen said, very decidedly: "it isn't etiquette to cut anyone you've been introduced to."[10]

The mutton leg, as well as all the food served at the banquet, is a totem in Alice's initiation in into the world of the Looking Glass. Alice has proved through her journey across the country that she is capable of being part of the society. But, still, she is an outsider, for she is not adjusted to the totemic group she has just become part of, because she does not recognize its totems nor the rules of behaviour one should have in regard to the other members of the totemic group or to the totem itself. Alice is not aware of the regulations and customs of Looking Glass; she is not aware of what the Royal Institute of Anthropology of Great-Britain calls "regras obrigatórias de conduta para os membros do grupo totêmico."

> Existem, com frequência, regras de conduta obrigatórias para os membros do grupo totêmico, como a proibição de comer as espécies totêmicas, formas especiais para se dirigirem uns aos outros, adornos ou emblemas, e um procedimento prescrito em relação aos membros do grupo totêmico.[11]

In Alice's struggles towards recognition and acceptance in a world to which she does not belong she had, first, to prove her capacity, which she did through her

voyage into the Looking Glass and, then, she had to go through the initiation ritual to become acquainted with the secrets of the society she had entered. But, as I have already pointed out in a section dedicated to fantasy, Alice's real struggle happens so that she can be accepted by a society of adults(*). Carroll, then, with a lot of irony and sarcasm shows that, although accepted, Alice does not want to remain in that social group, for her discovery of its secrets brings panic into her heart. The final scene of Through the Looking Glass quoted below, is a comic representation of Alice's failure to accept the ideals and rules of the society she had worked so hard to be accepted by. Also, it is interesting to notice that this scene satirizes Victorian primness as manifested in "table etiquette."

> There was not a moment to be lost. Already several of the guests were lying down in the dishes, and the soup ladle was walking up the table towards Alice's chair, and beckoning to her impatiently to get out of its way.
>
> "I ca'n't stand this any longer!" she cried, as she jumped up and seized the tablecloth with both hands: one good pull, and plates, dishes, guests, and candles came crashing down together in a heap

(*) Adulthood is represented in Through the Looking Glass by the Red Queen, Red King, White Queen and White King, mainly.

> on the floor. "And as for you," she went on, turning fiercely upon the Red Queen, whom she considered as the cause of all the mischief - but the Queen was no longer at her side - she had suddenly dwindled down to the size of a little doll, and was now on the table, merrily running round and round after her own shawl, which was trailing behind her.
>
> Any other time, Alice would have felt surprised at this, but she was far too excited to be surprised at anything now. "As for you," she repeated, catching hold of the little creature in the very act of jumping over a bottle which had just lighted upon the table, "I'll shake you into a kitten, that I will!"[12]

Another scene which raises the magic theme is to be found in Alice in Wonderland. This scene is the one in which Alice visits the Duchess and the Duchess' baby turns into a pig in her arms. The fact that the baby turns into a pig is an argument in favour of placing this scene among the events which Piaget describes as magic by participation between action and things*. For the magic of the child is not intentional in the sense that the magic of the primitive is. Children actually believe that phenomena occur in nature because of them, but they do not plan to exercise their "magic power" in advance,

* see page 95

that is, before the phenomena occur. On the contrary, they only realize their magic when the phenomenon occurs because it is then that they have to adapt the new information to their psyche. Of course the magic of the child tends to become symbological just like the magic of the primitive, but this only happens with the repetition of the phenomena; then it becomes intentional just like the magic of the primitive. In the cited scene, then, Alice is the magician; she is the one who has the magic power in herself since while in the Duchess' arms it was still a baby, but as Alice took it, it ceased being a baby and turned into an animal. The fact is that Alice did not intend to make the baby turn into a pig, but as it happens she assumed that it happened because of her and that it can happen again. This scene relates to the psychological meaning of magic, that is, magic as a psychological state of the child, and it reveals Alice's fantasy of being able, somehow, to rearrange reality due to a hidden power in herself: her magic power.

The idea of magic through participation, as Piaget describes it, has to do with the child's perception of the world and its inability to perceive what is real and what is not. Also I believe that it is clear by now that magic through participation is an attempt, on the child's part, to explain phenomena which she/he is not able to understand because of lack of abstract thinking. But this scene can also be understood as an animistic anthropological representation, for the baby may have the magic power in

itself: the fact that the baby turned into a pig, then, would be an evidence that the child's soul had left its body assuming an animalistic figure because its body had the inherent power of magic and witchcraft. Following this idea the magician would be not Alice but the baby itself. The Royal Institute of Anthropology of Great Britain and Ireland describes how anthropology views such transformations.

> Há quem acredite que algumas pessoas têm o poder de transformar-se em animais, ou que a alma possa deixar o corpo num estado inconsciente e entrar num animal. Em formas animais como a de lobos, leopardos ou tigres, elas podem ser extremamente perigosas, muito mais do que o são realmente os animais ferozes. Alguns desses animais transformados dão origens a cultos e, nesse caso, deixam de ser necessariamente maus. As vêzes, a capacidade de assumir a forma animal se atribui à feitiçaria nata.[13]

Another scene which brings about the theme of magic in the 'Alice' books is the levitation scene which happens at the very end of Through the Looking Glass. Alice is attending the banquet which is being offered in her honour, for she is by then Queen Alice and not an ordinary little girl anymore. Alice delivers her speech

and sits down, but as she rises to return thanks she levitates into the air providing an example of what Piaget calls magic by participation between thoughts and things*.

> In fact it was rather difficult for her to keep in her place while she made her speech: the two Queens pushed her so, one on each side, that they nearly lifted her up into the air. "I rise to return thanks-" Alice began: and she really did rise as she spoke, several inches; but she got hold of the edge of the table, and managed to pull herself down again.[14]

The fact that there is a relationship between Alice's thought "I rise to return thanks" and Alice really rising up in the air is an argument in favour of the idea that Alice is the magician, that is, that Alice has the magic power in herself. But, we cannot deny the fact that the situation is ambiguous, for here again Alice's magical act is not intentional. Therefore, magic can be a result of Alice's power as well as of any external/environmental power. Magic seems to have here a double role for it is both under and outside Alice's control.

By giving literary verisimilitude to the child's illusion that she is a magician or that there is actually magic by participation in reality, Carroll achieves an incredible level of universality. For Carroll summarizes the magic of the primitive that is, magic as a result of

* see page 95.

external influences and the magic of the child that is, magic as a result of personal and internal influences. The combination of these two aspects of magic which Carroll makes to overlap each other in his 'Alice' books gives the child who reads Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass the corroboration of her/his beliefs in what regards the power of materializing ideas through participation . For Carroll states as true what is true for the child and in this way he promotes identification between the reader and the representations of his stories.

The theme of magic appears again in two scenes which I considered parallel scenes in the section dedicated to the plots of the 'Alice' books. They are the scenes where Alice falls through the rabbit-hole in Alice in Wonderland and where she goes through a glass mirror in Through the Looking Glass. Those scenes represent the passage of little Alice from reality into the world of fantasy, magic and nonsense which is the world of dreams. Here I would like to introduce another idea about Carroll's treatment of the magic theme in his 'Alice' books: the literary conversion of common and widely known magic tricks. For I believe that many passages of the Alice books could be understood as representations of magic tricks which we all know because they are common in most magicians' performances. My idea may sound, at first, a little eccentric but Carroll's passion for magic was not exclusively a scholastic passion, for he attended every magician's performance he could and even managed to create some tricks for the entertainment of his

child friends. We would all agree that as Alice goes through the rabbit-hole or through the glass mirror, she does not know what will happen to her for she does not know what is on the other side. I believe that those scenes of passage could be compared with the magic trick of entering into a box and disappearing from it into the mysterious world of magic. But I also believe that those scenes are not the only ones which can be compared to magic tricks and in the following paragraphs I will discuss some examples of such a treatment of this theme by Carroll because I think that it also overlaps the ones previously discussed.

John Fisher in his book The Magic of Lewis Carroll[15] collects in its 281 pages a whole series of scenes which are literary conversions of magic tricks. The difference between my approach and Fisher's is that he is interested in proving Carroll's passion for magic tricks and mind games as well as their presence in Carroll's literary production while I am interested in showing the use of magic as a literary device in the 'Alice' books taking into consideration the three different aspects through which Carroll decided to represent this theme. Fisher states that Carroll wrote as a magician; my purpose, however, is not to reveal Carroll as a magician but to show that he has given literary meaning to magic in three different levels in his 'Alice' books: magic as a state of psychological development of children; magic as it is for the primitive, that is, magic as a state of social development;

and finally, magic as it is found in more developed and cultured societies, that is, magic as amusement, the magic trick itself. From now on I am going to discuss this last aspect or level of treatment of Lewis Carroll's magic.

A scene which carries at its core another popular magic trick is the one in Alice in Wonderland where she goes to the Mad Hatter's tea party. In this scene The March Hare offers Alice some wine, but there is none for her to drink. This passage relates to the trick in which the magician (performing with bottles with holes on their bottoms) would bring water, wine or any other liquid into containers which were apparently empty. Another scene in Alice in Wonderland which recalls a magic trick is the one in which Alice meets a Caterpillar smoking a long hookah. In Tenniel's original illustration of this scene we can notice that the Caterpillar, while talking to Alice, is wrapped in smoke rings(*). Since Tenniel's illustrations were somehow influenced by Carroll we can expand our idea that Carroll, here too, wanted to relate this scene to a magic trick. The magic trick which this scene seems to share something with is the one in which (with the help of a

---

(*) In Walt Disney's animated film version of Alice in Wonderland the Caterpillar's words assume a smoky coloured shape of letters and objects as he speaks. This association between sound rings and smoke rings is the same association which is the basis for the magic trick where the magician extinguishes a candle which is burning inside a box (with a small hidden hole in it) by producing a small tap from a distance of more than three feet. The secret of this trick is to aim correctly the sound ring produced so as to reach the small hidden hole.

perforated box filled with smoke) the magician is able to produce smoke rings which will wrap him by his simply tapping sharply against the box's base.

Many examples of this kind can be found in Alice in Wonderland and in Through the Looking Glass. The levitation scene which occurs by the end of Through the Looking Glass, which was discussed in the light of Piaget's conception of the chological meaning of magic for children, is also an example of a scene related to a magic trick, for it is part of many famous magicians' performances. Also, the use of numbers and the idea of different codes being attributed to them, creating new forms of "logical" thought, is part of many magicians' tricks. In Alice in Wonderland we have an example of such a mind game(*).

> - Oh dear, how puzzling it all is! I'll try if I know all the things I used to know. Let me see: four time five is twelve, and four times six is thirteen, and four times seven is - oh dear! I shall never get to twenty at that rate![16]

The use of cards, flowers, shawls, chess figures, thimbles and puzzles help to create the magic mood which is

---

(*) In The Annotated Alice[17], Martin Gardner states that Alice will never get to twenty because the traditional multiplication table stops with multiples of twelve and in Alice's system, four times twelve is nineteen.

so peculiar in the 'Alice' books. Actually, Carroll seems to have been an "aficionado" of magic and his diaries report attendance at several magicians' performances. Carroll was fond of illusions, but as he was also a mathematician extremely concerned with logic, it seems that what he appreciated in illusions was the ingeniousness of reasoning involved in their creation. It is as if Carroll were fascinated by the fact that magic, fantasy and illusions can actually arise from one's ability to make possible through reasoning what is commonly considered impossible.

In this way, Carroll explores the mysticism involved in the creation of an imaginary world, because for him everything was possible provided that the appropriate logical background was existent. Therefore in the elaboration of Alice in Wonderland and in the elaboration of Through the Looking Glass Carroll used devices which provided the necessary ground for his ingeniousness to develop. This ground is formed in the specific case of the magic theme by the presence of certain characteristics in the treatment of this theme. These characteristics involve Carroll's awareness of the psychological meaning of magic and of the social meaning of magic. The first mainly relates to the child's discovery of the world and itd understanding of it through personal reaction, that is, in order to commune and reach a certain level of participation in the environment and in society, the child develops the feeling that she/he has a hidden magic power in herself/himself. These feelings are not

generally intentional but tend to become so as the actions become symbolical. The second relates to the discovery of the world by members of a more primitive society who believe in magical powers of objects which are accepted by the whole group as having special powers. Here there is no relation between cause and effect and the phenomena are ruled by what Lévy-Bruhl calls "the law of participation."[18] Just like the magic of the child there is a tendency towards symbolism. But, perhaps, the biggest difference between the magic of the primitive and the magic of the child is that in primitive representations there is room for the presence of the magician while the child believes the magician to be herself/himself. In other words . the magical power in the understanding of the child lies in the individual, that is, it is an internal and controlled power. For the primitive, on the other hand, the magical power lies in objects and persons others than the individual, that is, it is an external and uncontrolled power.

Another characteristic of Carroll's treatment of the magic theme which I believe to be very important is the transformation of widely known popular tricks of magic into literature. The presence of such a literary device helps to create the atmosphere of mysticism and fantasy which are peculiar to the 'Alice' books and helps to promote enthusiasm and identification in the reader. But the peculiarity of Carroll's magic relies on the combination and actual overlapping of these three different tendencies in his representations of the theme. In other words, for Carroll,

fantasy, magic and illusions were a product of the mind's reasoning and logicality and not a product of an unknown and supernatural power. But he knew that magic, for the common man, has a special mythical and illogical appeal. So he profited from this human need, creating veraciously in a field in which he was expert, but which causes in non-experts a strong feeling of social and psychological identification. Social because it is related to the roots of our social organization, psychological because it reminds us of the struggles of our psychological development.

Also, Carroll seemed to admire the intelligence of the minds who thought as he did, that is, logically, and who could, just like him, create the impossible for the astonishment and pleasure of many. This is the figure of the magician who is free from any kind of pressure being it psychological or social; it is the figure who is able to create based on thought and reasoning, free of psychological or anthropological prejudice. This figure is somehow superior to the others for it has a charisma which characterizes its mental power. This figure can create illogicality from logic, illusions and fantasies from reasoning. Some may say that this figure is Carroll himself. So far, I can only say that Carroll's view of lack of logic was logical for he believed that logic and reasoning could create the illusions and the fantasies which the common man anxiously longs for.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1
PIAGET, Jean. - The Child's Conception of the World. New Jersey, Littlefield, Adam Co, 1975. p. 132

2
Ibid. p. 134

3
LÉVY-BRUHL. - How Natives Think. New York, Washington Square Press, Inc, 1966. p. 61

4
REAL INSTITUTO DE ANTROPOLOGIA DA GRÃ-BRETANHA E DA IRLANDA. Guia Prático de Antropologia. trad. Octávio M. Cajado. São Paulo, Cultrix, 1973. Original Inglês. p. 222

5
CARROLL, Lewis.- Alice in Wonderland: a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1971.

6
MAUSS, Marcel. - Sociologia e Antropologia. São Paulo, Editora Pedagógica e Universitária Ltda. Editora Universidade de São Paulo, 1974, vol. I. p. 57-60

7
CARROLL, Lewis. - Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W.W.Norton Company Inc, 1971. p. 88

8
REAL INSTITUTO DE ANTROPOLOGIA DA GRÃ-BRETANHA E DA IRLANDA. Guia Prático de Antropologia. Trad. Octávio M. Cajado. São Paulo, Cultrix, 1973. Original Inglês. p. 238

9
Ibid. p. 236

10
CARROLL, Lewis. - Alice in Wonderland: a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W.W.Norton Company,Inc, 1971. p. 201

11
REAL INSTITUTO DE ANTROPOLOGIA DE GRÃ-BRETANHA E DA IRLANDA. Guia Prático de Antropologia. trad. Octávio M. Cajado. São Paulo, Cultrix, 1973. Original Inglês. p. 244

12
CARROLL, Lewis.- Alice in Wonderland: a Norton Critical Edition New York, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 204

13
REAL INSTITUTO DE ANTROPOLOGIA DE GRÃ-BRETANHA E DA IRLANDA. Guia Prático de Antropologia. trad. Octávio M. Cajado. São Paulo, Cultrix, 1973. Original Inglês. p. 235

14
CARROLL, Lewis. - Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 203

15
FISHER, John. The Magic of Lewis Carroll. New York, Bramhall House, 1973.

16
CARROLL, Lewis. - Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 16

17
GARDNER, Martin. - The Annotated Alice. New York, New American Library, 1974. p. 38

18
LÉVY-BRUHL. - How Natives Think. New York, Washington Square Press, Inc, 1966. p. 61

NONSENSE AND THE 'ALICE' BOOKS

5.1. The Meaning of Nonsense

> "I don't know what you mean by 'glory'", Alice said.
> Humpty Dumpty smiled contempuously. "Of course you don't - till I tell you. I meant 'there's a nice knock down argument for you!'"
> "But 'glory' doesn't mean a 'nice knock down argument,'" Alice objected.
> "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less."
> "The question is", said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."
> "The question is", said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all."
>
> Through the Looking Glass - Chap. VI

I have started this discussion on nonsense with the above quotation of the passage in Through the Looking Glass where Alice meets Humpty Dumpty because I believe Humpty Dumpty's words to be the key to the understanding of Carroll's nonsense. But before any particular consideration about the Carrollian view of nonsense, we must define nonsense

and how it functions in literature. Once we do that, we will be able to understand what is peculiar about Carroll's treatment of this subject in his 'Alice' books.

Michael Hoquist in his essay "What is a Boojum? Nonsense and Modernism" describes nonsense as follows:

> Nonsense is a system in which, at its purest, words mean only one thing, and they get that meaning through divergence from the system of nonsense itself, as well as through the divergence from an existing language system.[1]

Holquist then, considers nonsense as a system on its own which does not depend on other systems to be understood since meaning is to be found in the system itself. But he goes further, stating the reasons why children are a better public for nonsense:

> Children are the proper audience for nonsense only to the degree that they let strange thinks remain strange; to the degree they resist forcing old systems on new, and insist on differences rather than similarities.[2]

Holquist, then, assumes that nonsense is a hermetic system whose comprehension depends on the virtue of being able to

accept a system as it is, without imposing on it the logic of other systems.

> In order to see a new thing we must be able to recognize it as such, and this is done by the willed inhibition of systems we have learnt before coming upon the novel object, an act performed in the service of learning new systems.[3]

In this way children are a good public for nonsense because they have a characteristic which makes it easier for them to enter into the logic of a new system without the need to relate the rules and forms of this new system with the ones of an old or different one. This characteristic is their lack of prejudice in what regards the new, for little children have not assimilated or created pre-conceptions yet.

Another important point to consider in this attempt to define nonsense is the fact that in spite of its apparently chaotic nature nonsense is an extremely well thought out and organized system. Nonsense relies on reasoning and logic and its understanding is reached by the discovery of the particular thinking the author used to organize the system he constructed. This fact is what mainly distinguishes nonsense from the absurd which is so commom in modern literature. Holquist states, in the same essay previously cited, the

difference between nonsense and absurdity as follows:

> The absurd is a contrast of systems of human belief, which may lack all logic, and the extremes of a logic unfettered by human disorder. Thus the absurd is basically play with order and disorder. Nonsense is play with order only. It achieves its effects not from contrasting order and confusion, but rather by contrasting one system of order against another system of order, each of which is logical in itself, but which cannot find a place in the other.[4]

The distinction between the absurd and nonsense is helpful in the sense that it clarifies the basic nature of nonsense which generally confuses the common reader. For nonsense is basically play with order and is characterized by a logical and orderly organized reasoning. The writer of nonsense, then, is a player concerned with the achievement of a logical coherence in the system he creates. The apparent confusion which puzzles and amazes the reader is attained by the confrontation of the logic and order of the systems created with the logic and order of other systems. The amazement and chaos originate from the fact that the logic of the systems are incompatible.

Wittgenstein, the famous language concerned philosopher, defines the ordely nature of a linguistic system in a way which can be also applied to nonsense.

> Será que aqui a analogia da linguagem com o jogo não nos será esclarecedora? Podemos muito bem imaginar que pessoas se divertem num campo jogando bola e de tal modo que comecem diferentes jogos existentes, não joguem muitos deles até o fim, atirem a bola entrementes para o alto ao acaso, persigam-se mutuamente por brincadeira, atirando a bola, etc. Então alguém diz: durante todo o tempo aquelas pessoas jogaram um jogo e se comportaram, a cada jogada, segundo determinadas regras.
>
> E não se dá também o caso em que jogamos e - 'make up the rules as we go along'? E também o caso em que modificamos - as we go along.[5]

In this way, nonsense might be defined as a search for perfect order and coherence. If we think of nonsense in

this way, that is, as a search for perfect order, it is very easy to understand Carroll's interest and fascination with it. It is enough to look briefly at Carroll's biography to understand that he actually was obsessed by order (*). Also as a mathematician and logician Carroll's main interest was obviously related to the attainment of order through reasoning. Carroll did not seem to believe in the "so-called" inspiration but on reasoning which could create systems of order which would, if compared to common every day systems, show that where there is logic there is apparent confusion and where there is confusion there is apparent order. Through nonsense Carroll provided us the logic and order which our own systems seem to lack. For what is life but a search for order? Biologically and philosophically man tries to overcome the disorder of his organizations and systems in an endless search for an order which is never achieved. In this way life is a game, and to be succesful in it means to achieve order. But, it is not a solitary game, for life as nonsense relies on social interaction. Francis Huxley in The Raven and The Writing Desk describes nonsense as "a logical game played with feeling by at least two people, in a spirit of self-contradiction,

---

(*) Holquist remarks that Carroll's obsession with order was a matter present in his every day life and not only in his literary works. His diaries report the creation of diagrams for the precise wrapping of packages, the existence of thermometers in his quarters which never let the temperature rise or fall below a certain point, the creation of a system for betting on horses which eliminated disorderly chance, the writing of a letter to the director of Covent Garden telling him how to clear up traffic jams and to the post office on how to make its service more efficient.

in such a way that one thing leads on to the other to the constant surprise of both parties."[6]

What is important here is that the common man does not seem to notice the struggle for order which is present in nature and life. In other words, the game of nonsense is many times taken for granted in the cycle of nature, and man is not always aware that the chaos in nature exists as a consequence of the search for order and not as a result of internal disorder. The truth is that routine helps to make sterile the kind of reasoning which brings about the awareness that life is a game of contradictions in struggle for organization and stability. Carroll's mind, on the other hand, was perceptive to this natural cycle of search for order in the universe and he, himself, as an individual was extremely concerned with the achievement of order in his personal life. Some may say that this obsession of his reached the edges of a psychopathology. Be this true or not, the real fact is that this personal feeling of his created what is considered the highest transformation of nonsense into literature. Holquist in his essay "What is a Boojum? Nonsense and Modernism" relates Carroll's obsession with order with his productions as follows:

> In fact it was in nonsense that Dodgson's compulsion toward order found its most perfect expression.[7]

In fact, Carroll was aware that reasoning could create systems of logic with the power to fascinate and involve both adults and children. But, most important of all, Carroll had a poetic imagination and a creative skill which made it possible for him to transform basic philosophical concerns related to life's nature into simple and appealing literary pieces. In a previous chapter, dedicated to magic, we examined the idea of Carroll's passion for reasoning as a means to achieve and satisfy the common man's soul. It was stated that Carroll liked magic for the way it gave the magician the power to create illusions based on reasoning. In this way, the magician fills the audience's need for illusions as well as his own natural curiosity by means of his ingenious intellectual power. Something similar happens in Carroll's treatment of nonsense. For Carroll was, consciously or unconsciously, aware of the anthropological and philosophical side of nonsense, and what he admired in it was undoubtedly its ability to achieve order through reasoning. Thus both magic and nonsense as Carrollian themes satisfy the common man's anxious longing for order and stability.

If magic is related to anthropology, nonsense has its roots in basic philosophical concerns which have worried man through the ages. Carroll seemed to have found an answer for these worries through the transformation of puzzles related to philosophical questions of man's and life's controversial nature into literature. Huxley in his The Raven and the Writing Desk states that Carroll was mainly concerned with two questions: the dream-

like and paradoxical nature of life.

> We have taken philosophy in its widest application, as referring to the meaning of life Carroll asked two rhetorical questions about that: the first, 'Life what is it but a dream?' and the second, 'Is not life itself a paradox?' It only remains to us to ask a third question, 'Is life nonsense?' to give full weight to the enormity of our thesis. For while it cannot be doubted that Carroll's nonsense was life to him, to answer the questions properly we must put it in front of the looking glass and ask 'Is nonsense Death?'[8]

Huxley's statement intends to show the two-sided nature of Carrollian nonsense which is characterized by the same paradox which characterizes life. For the worlds of Wonderland and Looking Glass seem to contradict Alice's ideas and conceptions, but the contradictions encountered by Alice are the same contradictions that we find in our own hermetic systems and in nature itself. As referring to the question of nonsense as the opposite of life, I believe we would agree that death is also life, for it is part of life and thus also part of the nonsensical game which stands in the middle of a process. Nonsense, in Carrollian terms, is both life and death, it is the axle which

summarizes in its own movement the natural and common movement of the universe.

In the beginning of this discussion I have inserted, in an attempt to illustrate the meaning of nonsense, Holquist's definition of it.* His definition raises an interesting point related to the meaning of nonsense. Holquist, like many critics, has the tendency to consider nonsense merely as a word play. Surely language plays one of the central roles not only in Carrollian nonsense but in nonsense in general. It is true that nonsense and language are closely connected, but the important point is not to establish the parallel that actually exists between language and nonsense as systems of communication and thought. My aim here is to clear up the misunderstanding that would lead to the thought that nonsense restricts itself to language and word play. For nonsense does not only deal with all the possible associations that exist within a system, whether semantic, philosophical, phonetic, phonological, gestured, numeric or graphic. Rather, nonsense plays with concepts of order in a given system of any nature. Language and nonsense meet in the sense that nonsense can be considered as a language due to its systematic and communicative nature, and also in the sense that languages, as systems, are among the preferable subjects of the nonsensical game because of their arbitrary logic which seems to lack reasoning. Nonsense, then, is a mind game which develops from associations within an orderly system of logic. Carrollian nonsense, by its turn,

see page 121.

might be described as poetic nonsense, for Carroll's nonsense in spite of its deep philosophical concerns finds a way of expression, not only in his 'Alice' books but in other creative stories of his (*), through his beautiful and well manipulated skill for giving literary meaning to his personal ideas and perceptions.

In the following section I will discuss in more detail the characteristics and peculiarities of Carroll's nonsense in the 'Alice' books. I shall do so through the analysis of examples taken from the books cited above so that Carroll's nonsense may be understood not only as a logical mind game but as an intelligent and skillfully treated literary device. We shall see that Carroll was a good and careful nonsense master who answered, through his stories, many questions referring to the paradoxical nature of life. Carroll's nonsensical language translates the arbitrariness of reasoning which exists in us mainly thought Humpty Dumpty's words - "The question is which is to be master - that's all" and we could go further saying that this idea was also translated by three different titles which, after all, refer to the basic idea of one's power to master one's own reasoning skill: Alice in Wonderland, Through the Looking Glass and The Hunting of the Snark.

(*) Sylvie and Bruno, The Hunting of the Snark, Sylvie and Bruno Concluded.

5.2. Nonsense in The Alice Books

Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass are not considered the best examples of Carrollian nonsense. Critics and the public in general are unanimous in considering Carroll's nonsensical masterpiece the epic poem "The Hunting of the Snark" which was published in 1876. "The Hunting of the Snark" seems to be the apex of a long line of thought which started in 1865 in Alice in Wonderland expanded in Through the Looking Glass and which culminated with the "Snark". After the "Snark" we may notice a certain decadence in Carroll's treatment of nonsense: the best that he was to produce was already published. My aim, however, is not to discuss Carroll's nonsense outside the 'Alice' books but to examine the best of Carrollian nonsense as it is found in them.

In fact, there is a clear difference between Carroll's treatment of nonsense in Alice in Wonderland and in Through the Looking Glass. For while Alice in Wonderland is characterized by a kind of hallucinatory nonsense which is marked by the enthusiasm and ingenuity of a beginner, Through the Looking Glass is characterized by a more ironic and meticulous nonsense which has the marks of a master. But the subtle irony which is present in both books raises the question of the presence of satire and social criticism in Carroll's nonsense as produced in the 'Alice' books. Some critics disagree with

the idea of Carroll as a satirist, for this thought would be in opposition to the one which sets nonsense as a closed system of its own. Derek Hudson in his biography of Lewis Carroll sets the problem as follows:

> 'Nonsense' lends itself particularly to an endless search for hidden meanings. But when we are told, as we have been told in The White Knight by Alexander L. Taylor (1952), that the books are laced throughout with intentional references to religious and academic controversy, the joke has gone too far. One might as well carry the search for direct meanings and allusions in the charmingly nonsensical letters that Dodgson wrote to his child friends . . . . There are certainly a few passing references to contemporary Oxford matters that might have amused the young Liddells, but such satire as there is in the books is based mainly on a general observation of human nature rather than on exploitation of actual circumstances . . . . That Dodgson did have a lot of contemporary controversy whirling in his mind while he wrote the 'Alice' books in undeniable; and Mr. Taylor has indicated some of the embittered circumstances of the time. But they remained in the background,

> were assimilated by the mind of the artist, and transmuted unconsciously into a work of genius.[9]

I agree with Hudson in the sense that I understand Carroll's satire as having a wider target. For Carroll did not only caricature Christ Church, Oxford and Victorian society. He went further making observations about human nature itself, and that is the reason why both Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass have been and still are so widely accepted. Satire is present in the books of 'Alice' in the way that nonsense emerges from a comparison of logics which cannot co-exist. In this way the confrontation of systems will, for sure, point at some universal social circunstances which are contrary to the logic of the new system. But, as Hudson intelligently emphasizes, it is obvious that Carroll had some actual circumstances in mind related to contemporary matters when writing the 'Alice' books. I firmly believe, however, that Carroll chose well and inserted in his stories symbols of wider representations so that his caricatures could be taken and understood in many different ways. It seems to me that to believe that contemporary matters are absent in Lewis Carroll's works is more than ingenuous: to believe this is to take Carroll as a man without a sense of history who was not sensitive to his environment and this fact is not true. The important point, however, is that Carroll was able to transform well the features of his own time into universal features. Doing

so Lewis Carroll revealed an awareness on his part of the movement of life and of man within it both as an individual and as a member of a community. So, we have in Alice in Wonderland and in Through the Looking Glass a nonsense marked by a deep and intelligent satire on human nature. The further point is that Carroll has structured differently the theme of nonsense in the two stories.

Through the Looking Glass is, undoubtedly a more organized story. In it Carroll's logic finds clear expression by the simple reason that the story is structured as a chess game. Alice has to win, that is, she has to go through her test in order to become Queen Alice, all that in eleven moves. Alice does so aided by Carroll's logical mind, characterizing in this way Carroll's concern with the systematic organization of the book. Carroll himself, in the preface to the 1896 edition of Through the Looking Glass states that the chess problem presented in his story is not purely an invention of his without a possible solution but an actual chess problem.

> As the chess problem, given on the previous page has puzzled some of my readers, it may be well to explain that it is correctly worked out, so far as the moves are concerned. The alteration of red and white is perhaps not so strictly observed as it might be, and the 'castling' of the three Queens is merely a way of saying that they entered the palace;

> but the check of the White King at move 6, the capture of the Red Knight at move 7, and the final checkmate of the Red King, will be found, by anyone who will take the trouble to set the pieces and play the moves as directed, to be strictly in accordance with the laws of the game.[10]

In this way, the 'transformation scenes' which were discussed in the introduction of this dissertation and which are a constant in Through the Looking Glass are merely literary devices used by Carroll in an attempt to transform a chess game into literature. For sure the contrary may as well be true since Carroll may have chosen chess because it allowed transformations. Also, it has to be mentioned here that the logical organization of Through the Looking Glass is not found in Alice in Wonderland nonsense of which obeys a much more disorganized system of logic and which is, for this reason, a more striking and unconventional story.

I believe that by now we have stated the most important generalities on the nature of nonsense in the 'Alice' books. In the following paragraphs I am going to present some examples of nonsense in the books in order to examine with care the peculiarities and characteristics of Carroll's nonsense in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass.

If we take the 'Alice' books chronologically, the first striking nonsense scene which deserves discussion happens to be in the seventh chapter of Alice in Wonderland, entitled "A Mad Tea Party." In this scene the reader is introduced to three famous characters of literature and of Carrollian nonsense: the March Hare, the Mad Hatter and the Dormouse. Also, in this passage the reader is introduced to the famous riddle which the Hatter asked Alice without providing an answer for it.

> The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was "Why is a raven like a writing desk?"
> "Come, we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles - I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.
> "Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?", said the March Hare.
> "Exactly so," said Alice.
> "Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.
> "I do", Alice hastily replied; "at least I mean what I say - that's the same thing, you know."
> "Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter. "Why, you might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what

> I see'!"
> "You might just as well say" added the March Hare, "that 'I like what I get'is the same thing as 'I get what I like'!"
> "You might just as well say", added the Dormouse, which seemed to be talking in its sleep, "that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same thing as 'I sleep when I breathe'!"
> "It is the same thing with you said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat salient for a minute,while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks,which wasn't much.[11]

In this passage we have two important points to consider. The first one is that Carroll is obviously playing with structure vs. meaning in language, foreseeing many decades later the failure of structuralism as applied to language learning and understanding. For by the simple inversion of syntactic patterns the meanings are not to be the same, and this fact is a paradox for any mathematically oriented mind. For the logical structure of a language does not obey the logical structure of mathematics, because they are two different systems. In mathematics 3 + 5 = 5 + 3 but in language 'I see what I eat' ≠ 'I eat what I see.'

Besides pointing at the apparent lack of logic in a language as compared to a mathematical system Carroll

is also dealing with the logic of free association through the riddle "Why is a raven like a writing Desk?" It is reported that Carroll did not have an answer for the riddle when he first wrote the book and Carroll himself wrote in a later edition of Alice in Wonderland that he had planned the riddle to be unanswerable but had thought about it and the only answer he could provide was "because it can produce a few notes, although they are very flat, and it is never put the wrong end front."[12] In this way, Carroll was challenging his readers towards a nonsensical kind of thought through free-association. For, readers in general would not be able to find an answer for such a riddle if they did not change their logic because within the logic of the common man the answer does not exist. Also, we have to note here that humour, in Carroll's answer, depends on the use of puns or double meanings for note and flat.

Now let's try to follow Carroll's thoughts. Who among us would think of putting a raven or a writing - desk with the wrong end front? Who among us would think about a raven producing notes? Now let's think about somebody from another culture where ravens and writing-desks do not exist. Would not this person put a raven and a writing-desk with the wrong end front? Besides, would not this person think of writing on the writing desk with a feather from the raven producing some notes? And would not this reaction be a consequence of an experimental use of the person's free intelligence rather than a conditioned act? The problem of

the riddle can be summarized through the idea that we have the tendency always to develop the same kind of reasoning because we are conditioned to develop our thoughts according to a previous scheme we acquire from the culture we live in. That is the reason why children are a good audience for nonsense because they have not been conditioned yet, their minds are free to develop any kind of reasoning without obeying a previous logic. The reason why I ask such questions is simply to show that Carroll's answer to the riddle escapes the traditional way of thinking because he tried hard to escape from the limits of convention and tried to create, through the use of the riddle, the same kind of feeling in the reader. Carroll's answer is nonsensical because it requires an association of pure logic, because it requires the free use of experimental thinking without the involvement of culture or knowledge of any kind.

Carroll's position can be justified and supported by the following words of the philosopher Wittgenstein:

> "Mas o que você diz não depende de que não haja, por exemplo, dor sem o comportamento de dor?" - Isto depende de que apenas se possa dizer de um ser humano vivo, ou do que lhe seja semelhante (se comporte de modo semelhante), que ele tenha sensações; veja; seja cego; ouça; seja surdo; esteja consciente ou inconsciente.
>
> "Mas, em contos de fada, um pote pode tam-

bém ver e ouvir!" (Certo; mas ele pode também falar.)

"Mas um conto apenas inventa o que não ocorre; não diz nenhum absurdo." - Isto não é tão simples. É inverdade ou absurdo dizer que um pote fala? (Mesmo um poema-absurdo não é um absurdo no mesmo sentido que o balbuciar de uma criança.)[13]

Carroll, then, wanted to trigger a process in the reader's mind, through the riddle, so that the reader would be able to follow by the free use of his intelligence Alice's steps in Wonderland. But, here again the use of puns constitutes one of the central points and the reader's initiation into free and experimental thinking relies on his capacity to perceive the humour and irony which arise from word play. The reader is, then, introduced to Carrollian nonsense in one of its simplest forms: word play. This initiation is important in the sense that it leads the reader to more elaborate and complex forms of Carrollian nonsense, as the story unfolds.

Another important aspect to be considered in the chapter "A Mad Tea Party", and which is introduced later on in the chapter, refers to the matter of time. Here again, as we are going to see, Carroll plays with structure vs. meaning.

Alice sighed wearily. "I think you might do something better with the time," she said, "than wasting it in asking riddles that have no answer."

"If you knew time as well as I do," said the Hatter, "you wouldn't talk about wasting it. It's him."

"I don't know what you mean", said Alice.

"Of course you don't!" the Hatter said, tossing his head contemptuously. "I dare say you never even spoke to Time!"

"Perhaps not," Alice cautiously replied; "but I know I have to beat time when I learn music."

"Ah! That accounts for it," said the Hatter. He wo'n't stand beating. Now if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock. For instance, suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons: you'd only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half-past one, time for dinner!"

("I only wish it was," the March Hare said to itself in a whisper).

"That would be grand, certainly," said Alice thoughtfully; "but then - I shouldn't be hungry for it, you know."

"Not at first, perhaps," said the Hatter: "but you could keep it to half-past one as long as you liked."

"Is that the way you manage?" Alice asked.

The hatter shook his head mournfully. "Not I!" he replied. "We quarreled last March - just before he went mad, you know -" (pointing his teaspoon at the March Hare,) " - it was at the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing..." Well, I'd hardly finished the first verse," said the Hatter "when the Queen bawled out" He's murdering the time! Off with his head!"

"How dreadfully savage!" exclaimed Alice.

"And ever since that," the Hatter went on in a mournful tone, "he wo'n't do a thing I ask! It's always six o'clock now."[14]

The point to be considered here is that in Wonderland time is a person, for the Hatter corrects Alice telling her to say him instead of it. In this way, time

instead of being an abstraction becomes concrete and alive. The Hatter was murdering time at the Queen of Hearts concert and his punishment was to live always at the same time: tea time. The interesting factor, however, is that in contrasting the nature of time of Alice's world with that of Wonderland Carroll plays with words in order to juxtapose the different treatment of time in the different systems. So, when Alice says "but I know I have to beat time when I learn music," the Hatter answers: "he won't stand beating. Now if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock". The point is that in Alice's system 'to beat' means ' to mark' while in the Hatter's more subjective mind 'to beat' means 'to flog or punish." Here systems can be understood not only as different cultures but also as different subjectivities or minds. Alice refers to time as she knows it, so she uses words which characterize time in her world. The point is that those words do not fit the conception of time of Wonderland and so nonsense is created. Alice and the Hatter are talking about the same thing: time. But the meaning of time is different for each one of them. What creates the nonsensical atmosphere in this passage is that the conceptions of time of Alice and the Hatter differ but still they use the same structure (word) to convey different meanings. Then, the Hatter has to explain to Alice what he means by time. In this way, Carroll shows the reader one of his main worries: the arbitrariness of language signs. We recall Humpty Dumpty, summarizing the thoughts of his creator: "The question is

which is to be master-that's all".

Another famous nonsense scene in Alice in Wonderland is the one concerning the Duchess' morals, which is to be found in the chapter entitled "The Mock Turtle Story." It is the second time that Alice meets the Duchess in the book, for they had already met in the chapter "Pig and Pepper." In their first meeting Alice was very amazed by the Duchess' bad humour. In this second meeting Alice is even more surprised, but the reason is not the Duchess' bad humour but the fact that she seems to be somebody else. In this second meeting, which is obviously a satire on Victorian didacticism, the Duchess is naive, gentle and boring: she bores Alice intensely with her nonsense morals which Alice does not understand.

> "The game's going on rather better now," she said, by way of keeping up the conversation a little.
> "'This so," said the Duchess: "and the moral of that is - 'oh, 'tis love, 'tis love that makes the world go round!'"
> "Somebody said," Alice whispered, "that it's done by everybody minding their own business!"
> "Ah well! It means much the same thing," said the Duchess, digging her sharp little chin into Alice's shoulder as she added" and the moral of that is - 'Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves."

"How fond she is of finding morals in things!" Alice thought to herself.

"I dare say you're wondering why I don't put my arm round your waist," the Duchess said, after a pause: the reason is, that I'm doubtful about the temper of your flamingo. "Shall I try the experiment?" "He might bite," Alice cautiously replied, not feeling at all anxious to have the experiment tried.

"Very true," said the Duchess: flamingoes and mustard both bite. And the moral of that is - 'Birds of a feather flock together.'"

"Only mustard isn't a bird," Alice remarked.

"Right as usual," said the Duchess: "what a clear way you have of putting things!"

"It is a mineral, I think," said Alice.

"Of course it is," said the Duchess who seemed ready to agree to everything that Alice said: "there's a large mustard-mine near here. And the moral of that is - 'The more there is of mine, the less there is of yours.'"[15]

Here, again, Carroll is playing with the old dichotomy: structure vs. meaning. Alice and the Duchess in spite of using the same linguistic code are talking about completely different ideas, for their conceptions about the meaning of words are different. That is the reason why, for Alice, the Duchess' morals do not make sense. Within Alice's

logic there is no place for the relation of the Duchess' thoughts with the morals she gets from them as general conclusions. When the Duchess says "flamingoes and mustard both bite" and the moral of that is - "Birds of feather flock together," Alice and the reader (who is not aware of Carrollian nonsense) get very puzzled. In the first place mustard is not a bird, in the second place there is no relation whatsoever between biting and flocking together. But, the point is that in Wonderland such a relation exists, and the Duchess herself in one of her morals sums up this idea saying - "take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves" referring back again to Carroll's concern with the dichotomy of structure vs. meaning. For here we also have the presence of the problem of having one structure with many different meanings and Carroll makes fun of this logical problem through the use of puns (mine: escavation, and mine: belonging to me). Carroll's satire on the arbitrariness of language signs is well put through the moral: "There is a large mustard mine near here. And the moral of that is - 'The more there is of mine, the less there is of yours.'"

Carroll is, then, pointing at the restricted character of language which condenses many ideas, conceptions and meanings in one concrete structure. He is denouncing languages as hermetic systems which have the tendency to classify thoughts in a repressive and uncreative manner.

Here again we find in Wittgenstein the theoreticall support for the kind of philosophical concern which Carroll discusses.

"We called him Tortoise because he taught us," said the Mock Turtle angrily. "Really you are very dull!"[17]

A good example of the coherence that Carroll wanted to provide his nonsensical language is to be found, later on, in this same passage. Actually the following scene doesnot only describe Carroll's attempt to create a more logical language but also exemplifies the game of nonsense very well. For both the Mock Turtle and Alice use the same language, but they refer to different points since they are each referring to their own cultural and personal systems of logic without exercising pure reasoning.

"We had the best of educations - in fact, we went to school every day - "

"I've been to a day school, too," said Alice.

"You needn't be so proud as all that."

"With extras? asked the Mock Turtle, a little anxiously.

"Yes," said Alice: we learned French and Music."

"And washing?" said the Mock Turtle.

"Certainly not!" said Alice indignantly.

"Ah! then yours wasn't a really good school," said the Mock Turtle in a tone of great relief.

"Now, at ours, they had at the end of the bill, 'French, music and washing - extra.'" "You couldn't have wanted it much," said Alice; "living at the bottom of the sea." I couldn't afford to learn it", said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. I only took the regular course."

> "What was that?" inquired Alice.
> Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with," the Mock Turtle replied; "and then the different branches of Arithmetic - Ambition, Distraction, Uglification and Derision."
> "I never heard of 'uglification,' Alice ventured to say. What is it?"
> The Gryphon lifted up both its paws in surprise. "Never heard of uglifying!" it exclaimed. "You know what to beautify is, I suppose?"
> "Yes," said Alice doubtfully - it means - to - make - anything prettier." "Well, then," the Gryphon went on, "if you don't know what to uglify is, you <u>are</u> a simpleton."[18]

So far, I have been discussing Carroll's nonsense paying close attetion to the nonsensical game as referring to language. Now I would like to give my attention to the satirical side of Carrollian nonsense which is well illustrated in the passage just quoted and which is attained by the confrontation of emotional language (id language) and mathematical terms (ego language). In the above passage Carroll is, undoubtedly, considering Alice's astonishment in being exposed to a different set of behaviour rules. Carroll records Alice's struggle in trying to translate the signs of Wonderland to her own signs. Sometimes Alice has the impression that the conversation is taking place on known ground, but, just as she thinks so, the meaning of the

conversation changes and she is made aware that she actually is in another world.

The fact is that Alice enters the world of Wonderland and remains conscious of her personality as well as of the society she comes from. Alice does not turn into an anti-Alice by entering in this parallel world. On the contrary, she continues being the prudish Victorian girl. In this way Alice personalizes our fantasy of entering into a parallel universe through a 'black hole' but remaining conscious of our personalities and having the gracious possibility of coming back with the knowledge of the mysteries of life. Carroll's satire relies on this point, for Alice is given the chance of living another reality but she has the need to compare this reality to the one she has left. Further than that, Alice is not totally aware that she has left Victorian England and this lack of consciousness leads to her astonishment. Also, Alice is made to look a little dull, for she is caught by means of her spontaneity in traps which reveal her snobbish side which does not find any support in Wonderland. In the passage just quoted this fact is wonderfully exploited by Carroll in what refers to the matter of <u>extras</u> at school. Alice asserts that her school offered extra subjects such as French and Music. But when the Mock Turtle asks her about <u>Washing</u> she indignantly said <u>no</u>. The Mock Turtle, then, was relieved for his school was better since for an extra charge it offered French, Music <u>and</u> Washing. The point here is that Alice, being an upper middle class girl, was very hurt at the thought of

being taught servile tasks, for in Victorian England schools offered washing as a service and not as a subject.

But at the same time that Alice is bewildered she is also fascinated by Wonderland and this fact leads us to a much deeper philosophical discussion. It seems to me that Carroll was aware of or at least had certain perceptions about some facts which are objects of study in the natural sciences and which have always been esoteric to man. But, although Carroll and the 'Alice' books were previous to the striking discoveries of physics and chemistry, which are reaching their climax as sciences in this century, he intelligently hints at future discoveries. If he does so consciously or by mere chance is not possible for us to know but the fact is that chemistry and physics as Natural Sciences have the aim of explaining natural phenomena. In this way Carroll's shares something with them, for in spite of the sophistication that Chemistry and Physics have attained, the main point that they have proved is that the inherent disorder in nature occurs as part of evolution. Carrollian nonsense, then, imitates life's struggle towards order proving that he was, consciously or unconsciously, aware of this natural struggle and succeeded in creating a system which has the same apparently chaotic movement of life in nature. Carroll's universality lies mainly in this point: the creation of stories which imitate life and its natural movement.

Summarizing this whole idea, I could say that the fact that Alice is fascinated by Wonderland and the

Looking Glass, in spite of all the astonishment caused by the differences of those worlds, is mainly related to our own inherent fascination with life and its expressions in nature. For life and its forms of organization in the universe remain a mystery. Besides that, the energetic power which contributes to the organization of the different systems of life is still the object of study not only of the natural sciences but of philosophy and other areas of human research. This endless search to know the mysteries of life and its beginning as well as its different forms of expression leads to its imitation through Art. This is what Carroll has done and he used in his nonsensical language, or better, in the elaboration of his nonsense system of thought and language the basic features which still fascinate man in spite of the enormous scientific advance of the last decades. For Carroll's concern with the nature of life found expression in his literary works through the imitation of life itself. Carroll attempted, through his nonsense, to get an answer for the question of everyone of us: What is life? I could transcribe here Carroll's own answer to this questions, "Life, what is it but a dream?" If life is a dream and Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass are the imitations of this dream, Carroll succeeded as an artist proving to be able to imitate with creativity and imagination, transforming life in literature with great skill. Carroll proved to be a great artist who knew well his function in society.

It is very interesting to look at life as a system which needs to be fed, that is, as an open system.

Also it is very interesting to compare this approach to life, as an open system, to nonsense. Doctor Julio Mesquita when discussing the pathological process provides us an interesting definition of life, as an open system, which could as well be a good and clear definition of Carrollian nonsense.

> Mas para que a trajetória biológica da vida como um sistema energético aberto se mantenha, é necessário um sentido direcional de organização, auto-regulação e irreversabilidade dos processos.[19]

It is interesting to notice that nonsense in order to remain alive, if such a word can be used, also needs a sense of directional organization, self-regulation and irreversibility of processes. In this way, the biological trajectory of life much resembles the trajectory of reasoning in nonsense. We could say, then, that the appeal of Carrollian nonsense lies in the way that nonsense, as a process, is in itself an attempt to explain a much wider and important process: the process of life. From this point rises the fascination and puzzlement of both Alice and the reader. For the fascination and puzzlement are basically related to the meaning of nonsense which is, actually, a literary device used by Carroll in order to transcribe the apparent esoteric aspect of life into literature. Therefore, Alice's mixed feelings and inner confusion reveal her astonishment,

fascination and fear not merely in the face of the nonsense of Wonderland and the Looking Glass but as a reaction to what that nonsense represents and stands for as a symbol.

Returning to the discussion of examples of nonsense in the 'Alice' books, I think it would be wise to turn now to the poems of the books. The poems of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass carry a good amount of allegory and satire in their representation of human nature. The first poem to be discussed is "You are old, Father William" which occurs in chapter V of Alice in Wonderland. Alice is talking to the Caterpillar and complains that she cannot remember things, that whenever she tries to recite a poem or a riddle it comes out wrong. The Caterpillar, then, asks Alice to repeat "You are Old, Father William" which actually is a parody of the poem "The Old Man's Comforts, and How He Gained Them". This poem was written by Robert Southey in 1799. In his parody of it Carroll makes an evident joke on the sentimentalism and devotional tone of Southey's poem is. Let's, then, compare the last two stanzas of Southey's poem and Carroll's parody of it, starting with Southey's;

"You are old, Father William," the young
man cried.
"And life must be hastening away;
you are cheerful,and love to converse
upon death:
Now tell me the reason, I pray."

"I am cheerful, young man,"
Father William replied;
"Let the cause thy attention
engage:
In the days of my younth, I
remembered my God;
And He hath not forgotten my age."[20]

now let's look at Carroll's version of the last two stanzas of the poem.

"You are old," said the youth, "one would
hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel at the end of your
nose -
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions, and
that is enough,"
Said his father. "Don't give your-
self airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such
stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you down-stairs!"[21]

Carroll's parody of Southey's poem attempts to represent more closely the 'real' Victorian father. But his representations of true human nature are not only expressed

in this poem. "The Walrus and the Carpenter" which occurs in Chapter IV of Through the Looking Glass also hints at the 'so-called' bad side of man. The problem is that this part of human nature does not find place in Alice's Manichean cosmovision and, thus, it raises inner conflicts in her. The rude treatment which occurs between father and son hurts Alice a lot because she does not accept that rudenes might be a commonplace in a relationship such as the relationship between father and son. Also, this kind of reaction has a lot to do with Alice's Victorian character since in Victorian society respect and controlled emotions were highly praised.

But Alice's offended tone at human crudeness or violence is much more noticeable in "The Walrus and the Carpenter." This poem (told to Alice by Tweedledee) tells the story of a Walrus and a Carpenter who make the acquaintance of some oysters in order to eat them. It is evidently a story of seduction of the most infamous nature but Tweedledee tells it to Alice in a very natural tone. Alice, in her turn, cannot understand the situation and in her following commentaries one can notice her struggle to adapt the theme of the poem to her Manichean or dualistic Victorian logic.

> "I like the Walrus best said Alice:
> "because he was a little sorry for the
> poor oysters."

> "He ate more than the Carpenter, though," said Tweedledee. "You see he held his handkerchief in front so that the Carpenter couldn't count how many he took: contrariwise'
> "That was mean!" Alice said indignantly. "Then I like the Carpenter best if he didn't eat so many as the Walrus."
> "But he ate as many as he could get," said Tweedledum.
> This was a puzzler. After a pause, Alice began, "Well! They were both very unpleasant characters - " [22]

It is interesting to note, as a curiosity, that the scene of the Walrus eating the oysters with the handkerchief in front is a perfect image of Victorian decorum serving as a mask for irrational appetite. But the best nonsense poetry to be found in the 'Alice' books is the poem "Jabberwocky" which appears in the first chapter of Through the Looking Glass. The first stanza of "Jabberwocky" is printed in reverse and it is meant to be read in front of a mirror. "Jabberwocky" is, undoubtedly, the nonsensical masterpiece of the 'Alice' books. In it, Carroll's creative language reaches its summit. Actually, the poem serves as a trigger to introduce Alice in the world of Looking Glass. For Alice does not understand the poem which is later on partially explained by Humpty Dumpty. The main objection to the understanding of "Jabberwocky" is,

for sure, its language which is mainly composed of words created by Carroll. The important point, however, is that "Jabberwocky" functions as an introduction and as a puzzler which motivates Alice and the reader to discover the logic of the poem, of the book and of Carrollian nonsense. "Jabberwocky" in Through the Looking Glass has the same literary function as "The Mad Tea-Party" in Alice in Wonderland. Both "Jabberwocky" and "The Mad Tea-Party" are keys to the understanding of the reasoning upon which the books were structured. But Carroll helps the reader to follow his free reasoning. In Alice in Wonderland he gave us the riddle and in Through the Looking Glass, Humpty Dumpty's explanation of the first stanza of "Jabberwocky." Humpty Dumpty's explanation as well as the riddle are important in the way that they reveal the code which forms the logical basis of the author's reasoning.

> "Would you kindly tell me the meaning of the poem called "Jabberwocky"?"
> "Let's hear it," said Humpty Dumpty. "I can explain all the poems that ever were invented - and a good many that haven't been invented just yet."
> This sounded very hopeful, so Alice repeated the first verse:-
>
> "'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
> Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:

All mimsy were the borogroves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

"That's enough to begin with," Humpty Dumpty interrupted - "there are plenty of hard words there. '*Brillig*' means four o'clock in the afternoon - the time you begin *broiling* things for dinner."

"That'll do very well", said Alice: and '*slithy*'?"

"Well, *slithy* means 'lithe and slimy'. 'Lithe' is the same as 'active'. You see it's like a portmanteau - there are two meanings packed up into one word."

"I see it now," Alice remarked thoughtfully: "and what are '*toves*'?

"Well 'toves' are something like badgers - they're something like lizards and they're something like corkscrews."

"They must be very curious-looking creatures."

"They are that," said Humpty Dumpty; also they make their nests under sun-dials - also they live on cheese."

"*And* what's to '*gyre*' and to '*gimble*'?

"To '*gyre*' is to go round and round like a gyroscope. To '*gimble*' is to make holes in a gimlet".

"And 'the wabe' is the grass-plot round a sun-dial, I suppose?" said Alice, surprised at her own ingenuity.

"Of course it is. It's called 'wabe', you know, because it goes a long way before it and a long way behind it -"

"And a long way beyond it on each side", Alice added.

"Exactly so. Well then, 'mimsy' is 'flimsy' and miserable (there's another portmanteau for you). And a 'borogove' is a thin shabby-looking bird with its feathers sticking out all round - something like a live mop."

"And then 'mome raths'?"said Alice. I'm afraid I'm giving you a great deal of trouble."

"Well, a rath is a sort of green pig: but 'mome' I'm not certain about. I think it is a short for 'from home' - meaning that they had lost their way, you know".

"And what does 'outgrabe' mean?"

"Well, 'outgribing' is something between bellowing and whistling, with a kind of sneeze in the middle: however, you'll hear it done, maybe - down in the wood yonder - and when you've once heard it, you'll be quite content. Who's been repeating all that hard stuff to you?"[23]

It is interesting to notice in Humpty Dumpty's explanation not only the notion of portmanteau words(*) but also the relation between meaning and structure in the words created by Carroll. As we have already said, Carroll was very concerned with the arbitrariness of language signs. His nonsensical language is a protest against this fact for he relates the meaning of the words with their graphic and phonological representation. In this way Carroll's creation of words obeys a certain logical rule, for his neologisms come from an obvious relation between words which are known or whose meaning is provided by Humpty Dumpty. If the reader follows the analogy which Humpty Dumpty draws when explaining the meaning of words to Alice, he will understand easily and completely the meaning of "Jabberwocky Also the notion of portmanteau words helps the comprehension of the poem, for it explains some 'strange' words which are, after all, the mere combination of two or more other words and whose meanings are present in the portmanteau word. In this way, Carroll's creativity follows a pattern (a pattern which influenced Joyce, Yeats and others) based on analogy, on comparison between the old and the new through pure reasoning.

Another important point to be emphasized here is the fact that Alice accepts Humpty Dumpty's explanation. Doing so, Alice shows that she is not, after all, so conditioned by the society she comes from, for she proves to be

---

(*) Portmanteau words combine the meanings of two or more words in a third and new one.

open to new systems. This is an important aspect because openness to new systems is a characteristic of children and Alice is a child although she, many times does not resemble one. Therefore it is basic to remark that despite the conditioning Alice remains a child and acts like one, eventually. Maybe this is the right place to mention something about Alice's character and how she stands in the stories, I mean as a literary character. I think it is important to establish that Alice's Manichean character is an accurate psychological description of children who are simultaneously closer to the 'darkness' of fantasy and more insistent on the flimsy ego-structure they have acquired. I believe that it is something basic and peculiar to her character, because she is a child, that she is both Victorian and open to the fantastic at the same time.

Returning to the nonsensical scenes of the 'Alice' books, another scene which points at the confrontation of two different systems of logic happens in chapter X of Alice in Wonderland. Alice is talking to the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon. The Mock Turtle, then, decides to sing to Alice "The Lobster Quadrille." As the Mock Turtle does so,both he and the Gryphon start to dance with great enthusiasm. As they finish dancing and singing, the following dialogue takes place.

> "Thank you, it's a very interesting dance to watch," said Alice, feeling very glad that it was over at last: "and I do so like that

curious song about the whiting!" "Oh, as to the whiting", said the Mock Turtle, "they - you've seen them of course?" "Yes", said Alice, I've often seen them at dinn -" she checked herself hastily.

"I don't know where Dinn may be", said the Mock Turtle; "but if you've seen them so often, of course you know what they are like?"

"I believe so," Alice replied thoughtfully. "They have their tails in their mouths - and they are all over crumbs."

"You're wrong about the crumbs," said the Mock Turtle: crumbs would all wash off in the sea. But they <u>have</u> their tails in their mouths and the reason is - "here the Mock Turtle yawned and shut his eyes. "Tell her the reason and all that," he said to the Gryphon.

"The reason is," said the Gryphon, "that they <u>would</u> go with the lobsters to the dance. So they got thrown out to sea. So they had to fall a long way. So they got their tails fast in their mouths. So they couldn't get them out again. That's all."

"Thank you," said Alice, "it's very

interesting. I never knew so much about a whiting before."

"I can tell you more than that, if you like," said the Gryphon. "Do you know why is it called a whiting?"

"I never thought about it," said Alice. "Why?"

"It does the boots and shoes," the Gryphon replied very solemnly.

Alice was thoroughly puzzled. "Does the boots and shoes!" she repeated in a wondering tone.

"Why, what are your shoes done with?" said the Gryphon. "I mean, what makes them so shiny?"

Alice looked down at them, and considered a little before she gave her answer. "They're done with blacking, I believe."

"Boots and shoes under the sea", the Gryphon went on in a deep voice, "are done with whiting. Now you know."[24]

Carroll again is playing with words, but his game is not only a language game, for it carries in its heart the notions of logic which are peculiar to him. If Alice's shoes are done with blacking, for sure the boots and shoes of the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, who lived under the sea, have to be done with whiting. Carroll is

trying to insert in the English language the coherence that it lacks due to its arbitrariness. Also, an important point to remark is that the nonsense is not in the language Carroll uses, for it is only a means to show that nonsense really comes about when the same code is used in different environments which do not share the same cultural background. Also, Carroll is here referring to the use of the same code by different persons which produces the natural difference of personal languages, and I firmly believe that Carroll also hints at the languages used by the same person (conscious ego language: whiting and the dream language of the unconscious: blacking). In this case the basic difference is that Alice lives on land and the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon live at the bottom of the sea. So, their personal perceptions about what life is differ, as well as their language in talking about it.

It remains for me to discuss an important aspect of Carrollian nonsense. I would like to mention, before finishing this brief and general discussion about Carroll's nonsense as produced in the books of 'Alice', that Carroll's nonsense, in spite of its strict logic, is very humanitarian. In other words, I am saying that Carroll is espousing a humanitarian logic which includes the possibility of illogicality in human affairs, but he is also criticizing rational systems for being inhuman. Through nonsense Carroll satirizes society and human conditioning to society, but he also points at the inherent imperialism of the human soul which tends to concentrate on one and only one system of

reasoning and living. Nonsense comes from the confrontation of systems and the lack of understanding between beings who use the same code but talk about things which are related to their personal realities. Carrollian nonsense denounces the lack of pure reasoning which hinders the growth of the humanitarian and intelligent soul which is able to communicate openly without being trapped by cultural conditioning and social prejudice. Carrollian nonsense achieves its universality not only because it deals with aspects which are curious to man but because it deals with the most basic feature of the human soul: the notion of property. As Humpty Dumpty puts it - "The question is which is to be master - that's all."

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1
HOLQUIST, Michael. What is a Boojum? Nonsense and Modernism. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. Donald J. Gray ed. New York, W.W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 408

2
Ibid. p. 412

3
Ibid. p. 410

4
Ibid. p. 408-9

5
WITTGENSTEIN, Ludwig. Investigações Filosóficas. São Paulo, Abril Cultural, 1979. p. 46.

6
HUXLEY, Francis. The Raven and the Writing Desk. Hampshire, BAS Printers Limited, 1976. p. 10

7
HOLQUIST, Michael. What is a Boojum? Nonsense and Modernism. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. Donald J. Gray ed. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 407

8
HUXLEY, Francis. The Raven and the Writing Desk.Hampshire, BAS Printers Limited, 1976. p. 123

9
HUDSON, Derek. Lewis Carroll; an illustrated biography. New York, Clarkson N. Potter, Inc, 1977. p. 157

10
CARROLL, Lewis. Preface to the 1896 Edition. In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. Donald J. Gray ed. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 105

11
Ibid. p. 55

12
Ibid. p. 55. foot note

13
WITTGENSTEIN, Ludwig. Investigações Filosóficas. São Paulo, Abril Cultural, 1979. p. 102

14
CARROLL, Lewis. Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 56-8

15
Ibid. p. 70-2

16
WITTGENSTEIN, Ludwig. Investigações Filosóficas. São Paulo, Abril Cultural, 1979, p. 52

17
CARROLL, Lewis. Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971, p. 74-5

18
Ibid. p. 76

19
MESQUITA, J.C. Objetividade Biológica; especulações. Arq. Cat. Medicina, Florianópolis, 9 (2): 5-6, jun. 1980, p. 5

20
SOUTHEY, Robert. "The Old Man's Comforts, and How He Gained Them." In: Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition. Donald J. Gray ed. New York, W. W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971, p. 36. foot note

21
Ibid. p. 38

22
Ibid. p. 144

23
Ibid. p. 164-6

24
Ibid. p. 80-1

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

6. General Conclusions

It is not very easy to write a conclusion to this dissertation because I believe that in order to do so properly I would have to explain to the reader the long line of thought which I followed in these months I have been working. Also, I would have to produce in the reader the same kind of mental excitement which the reading and studying of the works of Carroll have produced in me. I do not believe myself able to do either one or the other because the narrative of the process I have been so deeply involved with would require the skill of an artist and I do not claim to be one. But, in spite of the difficulties, I will try to explain in the next paragraphs what I consider to be my general conclusions concerning the fantasy content of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. Also, I will try to familiarize the reader, in spite of my handicaps in writing, with the steps my mind has gone through to arrive at such conclusions. By doing so I intend to make the reader aware of something which has been, so far, a personal intellectual struggle.

Also, I would like to stress that the aim of this study is to throw some light on fantasy,

magic and nonsense as present in the "Alice" books, taking into consideration the fact that they share something: their fantasy content.

Since my target is to clear up meaning, I have chosen to view fantasy, magic and nonsense through three different approaches that is, applying to these themes the approach which better illustrates each one of them. In this sense, fantasy was viewed through psychology, magic through psychology and anthropology, and nonsense through philosophy and logic.

I have to confess that when I started to research Lewis Carroll and his 'Alice' books, the only certainly I had was that I was fascinated by them. I did not know, at that time, where the research would lead me, or if I would be personally disillusioned with the author who had enriched my childhood with moments of delight and amusement. But the curiosity and desire to understand in adult and literary terms the importance of Lewis Carroll and the books of 'Alice' as works of art was stronger, and I proceeded anyway. From the very beginning two points attracted my attention: Carroll's preoccupation with freedom of individual thought and Carroll's preoccupation with the performance of a less-conditioned individual in a social group. Also, Carroll's humour and satire on social organizations struck me from the start as intelligent and coherent assertions about Victorian society and human organizations in general.

But the real comprehension of Lewis Carroll's thought only came as I started to study his nonsense, for it is in it that I found the importance of fantasy, magic and imagination as a means to achieve freedom of intellect. As a matter-of-fact freedom of intellect as well as the ability to abstract in pure terms are the main points of the 'Alice' books, if not the most important. Later on, I was to discover that this freedom and ability were symbolized by adulthood but not adulthood in regulated and repressed terms. I was to discover, then, that adulthood for Carroll meant individual plenitude, completeness and abundance of reasoning based on unrepressed and non-conditioned individual thought.

However, once I had the knowledge of what adulthood signified for Carroll in his books about Alice, I had to face the question of how he viewed childhood. Also, I had to examine the theme of adulthood vs. childhood as presented in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. The analysis of the treatment of those themes has made me conclude that the 'Alice' books appeal both to children and to adults because they operate at two levels of understanding. In other words, the fact that Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass are journeys into fairyland, into the land of imagination, fantasy and dreams, has made them operate upon readers at two different levels: one level relates to the use of symbols which appeal naturally to children another level relates to the use of an elaborated reasoning which appeals to the adult's more abstract mind. On both levels the theme is a passage from a state of irrationality to a state of

independent thought. Here irrationality as applied to children does not mean something which is negative or dishonourable, for the irrationality of Alice is a symbol not only of the more instinctive child psyche, but also a symbol of the regulated adult mind which has not transcended its state of social and psychological repression. Also, independent thought is a virtue which the adult characters of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass lack since they have not succeeded in creating and developing their personal line of thought but are, on the contrary, caricatures of an established system of reasoning. In this sense they are irrational too, since they do not master their own reasoning but act according to stereotypes. In this way, going through a rabbit-hole or through a glass mirror relates to our inner struggle for independence, to the act of growing up in true terms and not only changing size (a core fantasy pictured in Alice in Wonderland). The passage in the books refers to the eternal fight of the human soul to achieve a higher stage of existence and this state, in Carrollian terms, is characterized by the ability to cope with the difficulties presented by the environment without being trapped by its regulations.

Through the understanding of the Carrollian view of childhood and adulthood, the social criticism, the satire and the humour of the 'Alice' books became clear to me. For Carroll satirizes both in Alice in Wonderland and in Through the Looking Glass the repression imposed on individual reasoning by the forms of organization of society. But he

does so taking into consideration not only Victorian society but social organization as a whole, as it is understood nowadays by anthropoly. Everything which lacks logic, which seems to be arbitrary and not the fruit of human thought but a fruit of human adaptation to the environment without a true participation is presented by Carroll as follow forms of social interaction of the individual within a group. Alice, while in Wonderland or Looking Glass, is the symbol of the detached individual who cannot follow the rules of another social reality. Her struggle to adapt and her failure to do so reveal her own repression of thought as well as the new society's hermetic and arbitrary character. Because Alice does not know the myths, totems, institutions of the society she has entered, she cannot interact since her participation is not true but only an attempt to socialize on her own terms. The fact that neither does Alice understand the characters she meets in her journeys in fairyland nor do they understand her is a proof that their communication as well as their forms of organizations are based upon arbitrariness and not on reasoning. Here I had to return to the problem of the child and her perception of the world. Also I had, at this point, to consider the fact that children in general are more open to new systems of thought. Nevertheless, children, despite their openness to new systems, do not always have the capacity to think in abstract terms about the system just encountered. Children accept the system as it is presented to them and develop an inner reaction to the system through

what Piaget calls the magic of the child.

In this way, neither adults nor children are really able to interact, through true participation, in a strange society. While adults are too conditioned to accept and recognize what is based on logical thought and what is not, children are too busy discovering their own environment and instead of developing participation they develop personal and emotional reactions to the illogicality of the system presented. This does not mean, at least in Carrollian terms, that the personal and emotional reactions of children are not to be praised. On the contrary, Carroll seemed to prefer the all-emotional child thought which is rich in spontaneous reactions to the conditioned adult mind. The trouble is that neither adults nor children have the inherent skill to adapt themselves to realities which differ from their original one. In order to do so the individual has to go beyond personal conflicts as well as beyond social conditioning. In other words, in order to reach participation in true terms in a new reality the individual has to overcome two kinds of repressive elements; the repression imposed by the environment and the repression imposed on the individual by himself/herself in order to survive and co-exist within that given environment.

Carroll's irony, humour and sarcasm derive mainly from the confrontation of the individual with these two conflicts: the inner conflict of overcoming one's own repressed side and the conflict between individual and

personal reasoning with what is considered the regulations of thought of a social group. Here, I had to think with great care about the idea of Carroll as a satirist. Again the notions I gathered from his nonsense helped me a lot to understand his ideas on the subject of humour and satire. For Carroll in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass acts as the outsider, as the one who views the absurdity, the comedy of living with beings who are made unaware of their own capacity of reasoning. Based on these assertions I had to agree with the fact that Carroll is the master of his creation because he directs the stories in such a way that humour comes from the situations pictured and this can only be done when one has entire control over the subject of creation. This last conclusion of mine made me disagree with many critics who consider Carroll as a writer who tried to evade his own personal problems through literature. I do not think Carroll has done so. He has conveyed fantasies in his stories but whether they are a personal representation or not is not up to me to decide, though I admit they might be personal as well as universal fantasies. I prefer to think of Carroll as a nonsense master who had the capacity and skill to portray in literary terms not only basic concerns of mankind such as the preoccupation with life's nature, the organization of social groups, the achievement of freedom of thought, the attainment of real adulthood, etc., but also as a master who understood the importance of imagination and creativity as a way to

free one from the intellectual slavery imposed by the establishment.

Here, it is very important to stress the poetic, imaginative skill of Carroll, for I only really noticed the power of his aesthetics as I understood the weight he gave to ingenious creativity in different fields of his life. Carroll has implied through the writing of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass important scholastic concepts about the function of literature and his steps were to be followed by great masters of modernism such as Joyce and Woolf. The latter, in her essay entitled 'Lewis Carroll', refers to Carroll's representation of reality as follows:

> It is also to be Alice through the Looking Glass. It is to see the world upside down. Many great satirists and moralists have shown us the world upside down, and have made us see it, as grown up people see it, savagely. Only Lewis Carroll has shown us the world upside down as a child sees it, and has made us laugh as children laugh, irresponsibly. Down the proves of pure nonsense we whirl laughing, laughing.[1]

Also, by transferring to literature problems of consciousness and problems related to the value of human existence within society Carroll has touched matters which later on were to form the basis of existentialism. We could even trace a parallel between the Alice books and the kind of existential concern which we find in the literary works of Kafka and

Camus. But, Carroll's virtue was not to philosophize over these facts in his creative stories, but to transmute them with the wit of a logician and the imaginative skill of a poet.

As I came to these conclusions, I started to think of Carroll as a genius, and my enthusiasm was to be reinforced as I started to research deeper into his life. I noticed, by then, that Carroll was very aware of his social conditioning, and that his evasion (if that is the word to express such a mental activity) occurred through logic and not through literature. The literary stories of Carroll were means to give to many a personal experience, an experience of man's power to use imagination and fantasy as an extension of logic and reasoning. Carroll's praise of magic, fantasy and nonsense were rather a consequence of his intense thinking than an extempore and aimless act. In the beginning of the previous paragraph I stated that the understanding of Carroll's aesthetics relies on the knowledge of what ingenious creativity meant for him. I want to go back to that point now, not only to explain it, but to emphasize my idea of Carroll as a master who transforms logic into literature.

In previous discussions which allowed me to write whole chapters on the subjects, I stated the fact that what Carroll admired in magic, fantasy and nonsense were the games of thought and reasoning which were present in their elaborations. By bringing those subjects into literature Carroll has also brought a challenging task to the reader

for the reading of the 'Alice' books also requires the disposition and intellectual skill of a mind game. Through this process of discovery of the internal rules of the stories' structure the reader has to develop a mental activity which is similar to the one developed by the stories' creator. The fact that ingenious creativity played an important role in Carroll's personal life, the fact that he succeeded in transforming the logic which was behind any ingenious creativity of his into literature in a creative and imaginative way, through the use of literary devices which motivate the reader to participate intellectually in the stories' structure, has placed him among the few Victorian writers who have acted in praise of individual thought. By doing so, Carroll has also proved that he praised his audience's intelligence and that the understanding of his 'Alice' books were based on participation, that is through true participation which only occurs when one's mind understands fully the intellectual regulations of the new system.

One of the most interesting examples of Carroll's satire and criticism of stereotyped thinking occurs in one of the initial scenes of Through the Looking Glass. Alice is on a train and has no ticket to ride. The mood of the scene is of panic and puzzlement on Alice's side and of pleasant cruelty on the fellow's passengers' part. Alice's surprise is intensified when she realizes that the people on the train not only speak in chorus but also think in chorus!

It is also very interesting to remark the participation of the narrator in the scene, for Carroll actually states, in this scene, his own ideas about what thinking in chorus meant for him.

> Alice thought to herself "Then there's no use in speaking." The voices didn't join in, this time, as she hadn't spoken, but, to her great surprise, they all thought in chorus (I hope you understand what thinking in chorus means - for I must confess that I don't).[2]

As the notion of Carroll as a satirist who had an intelligent mind and who criticised the lack of creativity in personal thought became clear to me, I decided that I had to involve myself deeper in his notions of nonsense and in his vision of it as applied to literature. I do not intend to describe here the whole process of Carrollian nonsense because I have already done it with enough details in a chapter entirely dedicated to nonsense. My aim, here, is to transmit to the reader the relations and associations which exist between nonsense, in Carrollian terms, fantasy, magic and humour and satire.

Carroll's nonsensical game is a play with language and notions or concepts which requires accuracy of thought and a certain creative skill to be fully understood. Also, nonsense, in general, is an interesting literary device in the sense that through it the author is allowed to make serious criticism without the danger of causing conflicts in the reader and in the society in which the work of art

is produced. In this way nonsense is a theme which generally occurs, at least in literature, in pieces which carry severe criticism of society and human nature in general. Fantasy, in its turn, is a theme which is generally present in fairy tales and children's books although, more recently, modern writers have had the tendency of including aspects of fantasy in their productions. Magic has always been a common theme in literature, but it appeared hidden under the cover of what we generally call "fortune" and seldom carried in its heart the anthropological verisimilitude that Carroll has provided in his 'Alice' books. Humour and satire are also old literary themes but they require on the author's part a skill which not all of us have.

But, in spite of the value and weight that fantasy, magic and humour and satire have in the 'Alice' books, the common point (the point of liaison) between all those themes is nonsense. In this way, nonsense is the most important theme in Carroll's 'Alice' for it includes in itself fantasy, magic, humour and satire. Nonsense in Carrollian terms is a mind game which summarizes in itself, through logic and reasoning, our fantasies of mastering our own thought and fullfilling, in this way all the other repressed wishes which are consequences of thought repression. Also nonsense requires the questioning of reality and the concern with the dichotomy: illusion vs. reality, for it is a pure, abstract mental activity and its limits are the limits of our thought. In this way Carrollian nonsense includes the

notions of illusions or "unrealities" as a product of the mind, the notions of the actual possibility of rendering true that which is mentally conceived. And this is the basis of magic both as it is found in the child and as it is found in cultural representations of social groups. Finally, nonsense has in itself the inherent power to play with systems. For nonsense is created from the confrontation of logics which cannot co-exist and this confrontation of logics which are not compatible is the seed of humour and satire.

As my thinking arrived at this point, I realized that the fear of being deceived, which I felt at the time I had begun working, was pointless. The study of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass had proved to be a success in the sense that I was personally satisfied with the results encountered. But the question of my own satisfaction, I thought, should not be taken too seriously in the case of an academic work. Therefore, I started to think about the real source of my satisfaction. I noticed, then, that the pleasure I was experiencing was related to something bigger and more important than the mere fact of not being deceived by one of the heros of my childhood. I became aware that this pleasure was related to the several and uncountable intellectual possibilities that Carroll offered me in his 'Alice' books. Furthermore, those intellectual possibilities (that is, the belief in the infinite power of creation of

my mind) was a gift received not as a researcher but as a common reader. For the pleasure felt by the end of my studies was the same pleasure felt at the time I first read the 'Alice' books, in my early days. The satisfaction, I thought then, concerned the hope of one's own capacity to master his/her mental skills with creativity and originality.

In an attempt to comprehend in adult and scientific terms the personal sentiments which I was experiencing, I returned to Carroll's nonsense and in it I found the rational answer for this kind of reaction to the books of 'Alice'. Nonsense plays with a very important notion, the notion of the human soul's imperialism, the notion of private property which creates in humanity the tendency to follow only one system of thought and reasoning. But at the same time that Carroll criticizes this aspect of man's character, denouncing the hermetic character of the systems we elaborate, he also praises the notion of privacy as applied to individual thought. In this way, Carroll criticises the reductive demands placed by the system on the individual and values very highly the personal revolt against this type of subtle depersonalization.

My thoughts led me, then to realize that the fantasy content of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass is basically concerned with our wish to direct, master and conduct freely that which is authentically ours: our thoughts. Carroll's gift in his 'Alice' books is, then, a gift of hope in our capacity to keep personal that

which is originally private, that which is ours as a present from nature, that which he teaches us to mostly praise: our freedom of intellect. Higher existence in Carrollian terms means, in this way, the achievement and the exercise of this freedom even in adverse circumstances. Here, it is important to stress the fact that Carroll grew up and lived in Victorian England. Nevertheless, he dared to create Alice and the worlds of Wonderland and Looking Glass and they were and still are his gifts of hope to children and adults. For to read Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass is to become conscious that our power to reason without the chains of social prejudice and conditioning is a goal which can be achieved: Carroll has proved it to us.

When I arrived at this point I was very happy because I realized that the most general and true assumption I could establish about Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass was concerned with the notion of hope. For I think it is very ambitious to aim at something more than general assumptions when discussing Carroll so briefly. Anyone who is reading or has read Lewis Carroll would agree with me on the fact that Carroll touches in his 'Alice' books so many interesting and universal points that it would be unwise and even anti-Carrollian to try to explain them in definitive terms. That is the reason why it has been so hard, for me, to write a conclusion, since there is not really a conclusion but only generalities about certain topics related to Carroll's 'Alices'. Among

those generalities, maybe, the most important (or better the most relevant or common) as a literary theme is the notion of hope in one's own capacity to reason and create freely.

I would like to state, that I do not consider my research finished, that the main aim of this dissertation was to raise general questions about Carroll's treatment of magic, fantasy and nonsense as well as their possible fantasy content in Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. But those general questions, I believe, should be further explored since they outline a wider and richer literary approach to Carroll which stresses his attempt to surpass the limits and restrictions of received ideas and reductive thought.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1
WOOLF, Virginia. - Lewis Carroll. In: Aspects of Alice. Robert Phillips ed. New York, Vintage Books, 1975. p. 48-9

2
CARROLL, Lewis. - Alice in Wonderland; a Norton Critical Edition, W.W. Norton Company, Inc, 1971. p. 130

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

BETTELHEIM, Bruno. The Uses of Enchantment. New York, Random House, 1976.

CARROLL, Lewis. Alice in Wonderland, a Norton Critical Edition, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1971.

CARROLL, Lewis. Lewis Carroll's Bedside Book, Entertainments for the wakeful hours. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979.

FENICHEL, Otto. The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis. New York, W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1945.

FISHER, John. The Magic of Lewis Carroll. New York,Bramhall House, 1973.

FREUD, Sigmund. Obras Completas. Madrid, Editorial Bibliote ca Nueva, 1973, Tomo I.

GARDNER, Martin. The Annotated Alice. New York, New American Library, 1974.

HUDSON, Dereck. Lewis Carroll, an illustrated biography.New York, Clarkson N. Potter, Inc, 1977.

HUXLEY, Francis. The Raven and The Writing Desk. Hampshire, BAS Printers Limited, 1976.

KALINA, Eduardo. Psicoterapia de Adolescentes. Rio de Janeiro, Livraria Francisco Alves Editora S.A., 1976.

LÉVY-BRUHL. How Natives Think. New York, Washington Square Press, Inc, 1966.

MAUSS, Marcel. Sociologia e Antropologia. São Paulo, Editora Pedagógica e Universitária Ltda. Editora Universidade de São Paulo, 1974, vol I.

MESQUITA, J.C. Objetividade Biológica; especulações. Arq. Cat. Medicina, Florianópolis, 9 (2): 5-6, jun. 1980.

PHILLIPS, Robert. Aspects of Alice. New York, Vintage Books, 1975.

PIAGET, Jean. The Child's Conception of the World. New Jersey, Littlefield, Adams Co. 1975.

REAL INSTITUTO DE ANTROPOLOGIA DA GRÃ-BRETANHA E DA IRLANDA. Guia Prático de Antropologia. Trad. Octávio M. Cajado. São Paulo, Cultrix, 1973. Original Inglês.

SEGAL, Hanna. Introdução à Obra de Melanie Klein. São Paulo, Companhia Editora Nacional, 1966.

UCHOA LEITE, Sebastião. O que a Tartaruga disse a Lewis Carroll. In: Aventuras de Alice. Sebastião Uchoa Leite ed. São Paulo, Summus, 1980.